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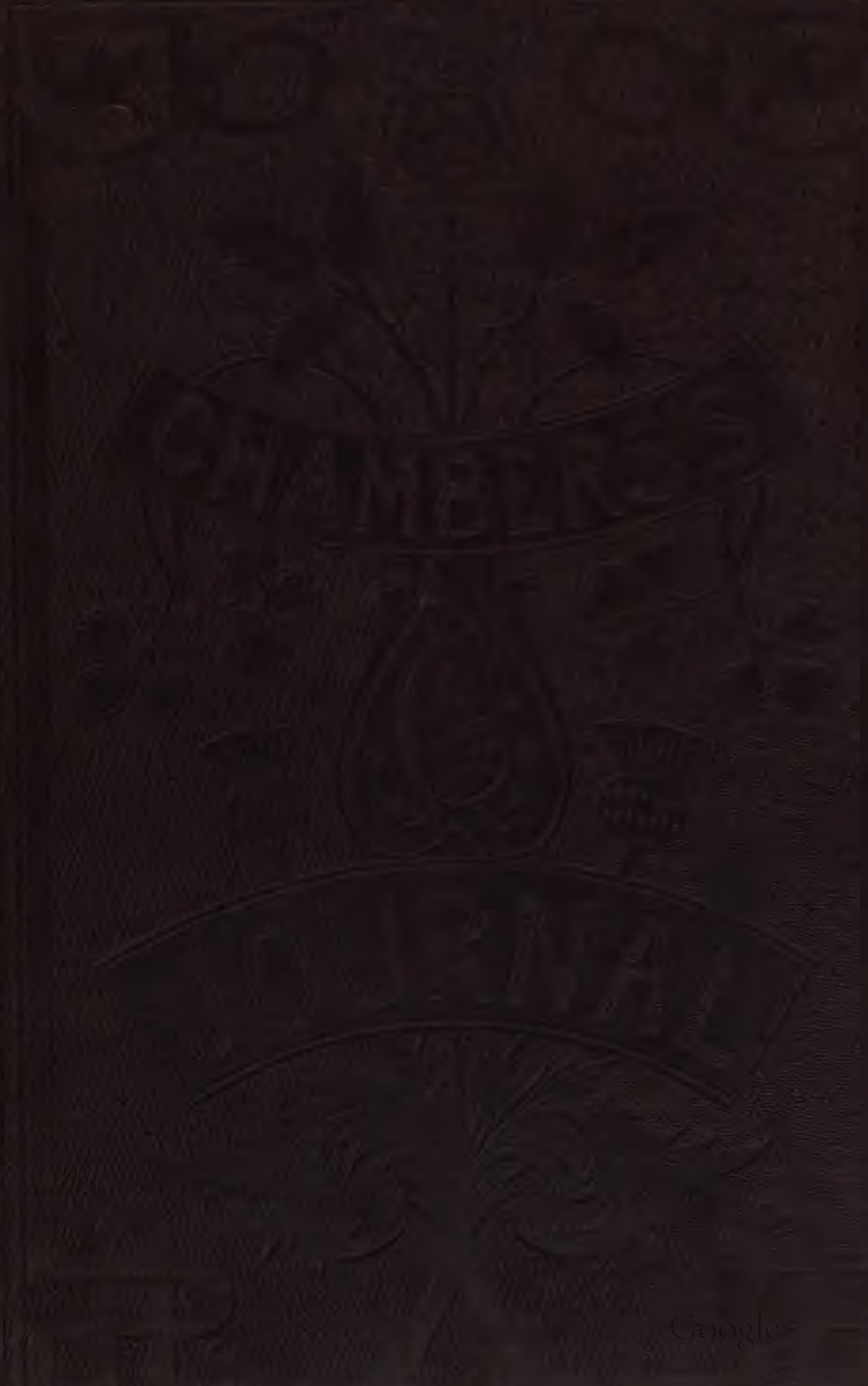

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THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.*

CHAPTER I.

SOUVENIRS.

LAND of the nopal and maguey—home of Moctezuma and Malinché!—I cannot wring thy memories from my heart! Years may roll on, hand wax weak, and heart grow old, but never till both are cold can I forget thee! I *would* not; for thee would I remember. Not for all the world would I bathe my soul in the waters of Lethe. Blessed be memory for thy sake!

Bright land of Anahuac! my spirit mounts upon the aërial wings of Fancy, and once more I stand upon thy shores! Over thy broad savannahs I spur my noble steed, whose joyous neigh tells that he too is inspired by the scene. I rest under the shade of the *corozo* palm, and quaff the wine of the *acrocomia*. I climb thy mountains of amygdaloid and porphyry—thy crags of quartz, that yield the white silver and the yellow gold. I cross thy fields of lava, rugged in outline, and yet more rugged with their coverture of strange vegetable forms—the cycas and cactus, yuccas and zamias. I traverse thy table-plains through bristling rows of giant aloes, whose sparkling juice cheers me on my path. I stand upon the limits of eternal snow, crushing the Alpine lichen under my heel; while down in the deep barranca, far down below, I behold the feathery fronds of the palm, the wax-like foliage of the orange, the broad shining leaves of the pothos, the arums, and bananas! O that I could look with living eye on these bright pictures! But even palely outlined upon the retina of memory, they impart a soothing pleasure to my soul.

Land of Moctezuma! I have other souvenirs of thee, more deeply graven on my memory than these pictures of peace. Thou recallest scenes of war. I traversed thy fields a foeman—sword in hand—and now, after years gone by, many a wild scene of soldier-life springs up before me with all the vividness of reality.

The Bivouac!—I sit by the night camp-fire; around are warlike forms and bearded faces. The blazing log reflects the sheen of arms and accoutrements—saddles, rifles, pistols, canteens, strewing the ground, or hanging from the branches of adjacent trees. Picketed steeds loom large in the darkness, their forms dimly outlined against the sombre background of the forest. A solitary palm stands near, its curving fronds looking hoary under the fire-light. The same light gleams upon the fluted columns of the great organ-cactus, upon agaves and bromelias, upon the silvery *tillandsia*, that drapes the tall trees as with a toga.

The wild tale is told—the song is sung—the jest goes round—the hoarse peal echoes through the aisles of the forest, frighting the parrot on its perch, and the wolf upon his prowl. Little reck they who sing, and jest, and laugh—little reck they of the morrow.

* * * *

The Skirmish!—Morning breaks. The fragrant forest is silent, and the white blue light is just tinging the tree-tops. A shot rings upon the air: it is the warning-gun of the picket-sentinel, who comes galloping in upon the guard. The enemy approaches! 'To horse!' the bugle thrills in clear loud notes. The slumberers spring to their feet—they seize their rifles, pistols, and sabres, and dash through the smouldering fires till ashes cloud the air. The steeds snort and neigh; in a trice they are saddled, bridled, and mounted; and away sweeps the troop along the forest road.

The enemy is in sight—a band of *guerillas*, in all their picturesqueness of *manga* and *serapé*—of scarlet, purple, and gold. Lances, with shining points and streaming pennons, overtop the trees.

The bugle sounds the charge; its notes are drowned by the charging cheer. We meet our swarthy foemen face to face; spear-thrusts are answered by pistol-shots; our sabres cross and clink, but our snorting steeds rear back, and will not let us kill each other. We wheel and meet again, with deadlier aim, and more determined arm; we strike without remorse—we strike for freedom!

* * * *

The Battle-field!—The serried columns and the bristling guns—the roar of cannon and the hoarse roll of drums—the bugle's wildest notes, the cheer, the charge—the struggle hand to hand—the falling foeman and his dying groan—the rout, retreat, the hoarse huzza for victory! I well remember, but I cannot paint them.

* * * *

Land of Anahuac! thou recallest other scenes, far different from these—scenes of tender love or stormy passion. The strife is o'er—the war-drum has ceased to beat, and the bugle to bray; the steed stands chafing in his stall, and the conqueror dallies in the halls of the conquered. Love is now the victor, and the stern soldier, himself subdued, is transformed into a wooing lover. In gilded hall or garden bower, behold him on bended knee, whispering his soft tale in the ear of some dark-eyed *donçella*, Andalusian or Aztec!

* * * *

Lovely land! I have sweet memories of thee; for who could traverse thy fields without beholding some fair flower, ever after to be borne upon his bosom. And yet, not all my souvenirs are glad. Pleasant and painful, sweet and sad, they thrill my heart with alternate throes. But the sad emotions have been tempered by time, and the glad ones, at each returning tide, seem tinged with brighter glow. In thy bowers, as elsewhere, roses must be plucked from thorns; but in memory's mellowed light I see nót the thorns—I behold only the bright and beautiful roses.

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CHAPTER II.

A MEXICAN FRONTIER VILLAGE.

A Mexican *pueblita* on the banks of the Rio Bravo del Norté—a mere *rancheria* or hamlet. The quaint old church of Morisco-Italian style, with its cupola of motley japan, the residence of the *cura*, and the house of the *alcaldé*, are the only stone structures in the place. These constitute three sides of the plazza, a somewhat spacious square. The remaining side is taken up with shops or dwellings of the common people. They are built of large unburnt bricks (*adobés*), some of them washed with lime, others gaudily coloured like the proscenium of a theatre, but most of them uniform in their muddy and forbidding brown. All have heavy, jail-like doors, and windows without glass or sash. The *reja* of iron bars set vertically, opposes the burglar, not the weather.

From the four corners of the plazza, narrow, unpaved, dusty lanes lead off to the country, for some distance bordered on both sides by the adobé houses. Still further out, on the skirts of the village, and sparsely placed, are dwellings of frailer build, but more picturesque appearance; they are *ridge-roofed* structures, of the split trunks of that gigantic lily, the arborescent yucca. Its branches form the rafters, its tough fibrous leaves the thatch. In these *ranchitos* dwell the poor peons, the descendants of the conquered race.

The stone dwellings, and those of mud likewise, are *flat-roofed*, tiled or cemented, sometimes tastefully japanned, with a parapet breast-high running round the edge. This flat roof is the *azotea*, characteristic of Mexican architecture.

When the sun is low and the evening cool, the azotea is a pleasant lounging-place, especially when the proprietor of the house has a taste for flowers; then it is converted into an aërial garden, and displays the rich flora, for which the picture-land of Mexico is justly celebrated. It is just the place to enjoy a cigar, a glass of *pinole*, or, if you prefer it, *catalan*. The smoke is wafted away, and the open air gives a relish to the beverage. Besides, your eye is feasted; you enjoy the privacy of a drawing-room, while you command what is passing in the street. The slight parapet gives security, while hindering a too free view from below; you see, without being seen. The world moves on, busied with earthly affairs, and does not think of looking up.

I stand upon such an azotea: it is that over the house of the alcaldé; and his being the tallest roof in the village, I command a view of all the others. I can see beyond them all, and note the prominent features of the surrounding country. My eye wanders with delight over the deep rich verdure of its tropic vegetation; I can even distinguish its more characteristic forms—the cactus, the yucca, and the agave. I observe that the village is girdled by a belt of open ground—cultivated fields—where the maize waves its silken tassels in the breeze, contrasting with the darker leaves of the capsicums and bean-plants (frijoles). This open ground is of limited extent. The *chapparal*, with its thorny thicket of acaçias, mimosæ, ingas, and robinias—a perfect maze of leguminous trees—hems it in; and so near is the verge of this jungle, that I can distinguish its undergrowth of stemless *sabal* palms and bromelias—the sun-scorched and scarlet leaves of the *pita* plant shining in the distance like lists of fire.

This propinquity of the forest to the little pueblita bespeaks the indolence of the inhabitants; perhaps not. It must be remembered that these people are not agriculturists, but *vaqueros* (herdsmen); and that the glades and openings of that thick chapparal are speckled with herds of fierce Spanish cattle, and droves of small sharp-eared Andalusian horses, of the race of the Barb. The fact of so little cultivation does not abnegate the existence of industry on the part of the villagers. Grazing is their occupation, not farming; only a little of the latter to give them maize for their *tortillas*, chilé to season it with, and black beans to complete the repast. These three, with the half-wild beef of their wide pastures, constitute the staple of food throughout all Mexico. For drink, the denizen of the high tableland finds his favourite beverage—the rival of champagne—in the core of the gigantic aloe; while he of the tropic coast-land refreshes himself from the stem of another native endogen, the acrocomia palm.

Favoured land! Ceres loves thee, and Bacchus too. To thy fields both the god and the goddess have been freely bounteous. Food and drink may be had from them on easy terms. Alas! as in all other lands—one only excepted—Nature's divine views have been thwarted, her aim set aside, by the malignity of man. As over the broad world, the blight of the despot is upon thy beauty.

Why are these people crowded together—hived, as it were, in towns and villages? Herdsmen, one would expect to find scattered by reason of their occupation. Besides, a sky continually bright, a genial clime, a picturesqueness of scene—all seem to invite to rural life; and yet I have ridden for hours, a succession of lovely landscapes rising before my eyes, all of them wild, wanting in that one feature which makes the rural picture perfect—the house, the dwelling of man! Towns there are, and at long intervals the huge *hacienda* of the landed lord, walled in like a fortress; but where are the *ranchos*, the homes of the common people? True, I have noticed the ruins of many, and that explains the puzzle. I remember, now that I am on the *frontier*; that for years past the banks of the Rio Bravo, from its source to the sea, have been hostile ground—a war-border of 1500 miles in length! Many a red conflict has occurred—is still occurring—between those Arabs of the American desert—the *Horse* Indians—and the pale-faced descendants of the Spaniard. That is why the ranchos exist only in ruins—that is why the haciendas are loopholed, and the populace pent up within walls. The condition of feudal Europe exists in free America, on the banks of the Rio Bravo del Norté!

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Nearly a mile off, looking westward, I perceive the sheen of water: it is a reach of the great river that glances under the setting sun. The river curves at that point; and the summit of a gentle hill, half girdled by the stream, is crowned by the low white walls of a hacienda. Though only one story high, this hacienda appears, from its extent, and the style of its architecture, to be a noble mansion. Like all of its class, it is flat-roofed; but the parapet is crenated, and small ornamental turrets over the angles and the great gateway relieve the monotony of its outlines. A larger tower, the belfry, appears in the background, for the Mexican hacienda is usually provided with its little *capilla*, for the convenient worship of the peon retainers. The emblems of religion, such as it is, are thick over the land. The glimmer of glass behind the iron rejas relieves to some extent the prison-like aspect, so characteristic of Mexican country-houses. This is further modified by the appearance over the parapet of green foliage. Forms of tropic vegetation shew above the wall; among others, the graceful curving fronds of a palm. This must be an exotic, for although the lower half of the Rio Bravo is within the zone of the palms, the species that grow so far north are fan-palms (*chamærops* and *sabal*). This one is of far different form, with plume-shaped pinnate fronds, of the character of *cocos*, *phœnix*, or *euterpe*. I note the fact, not from any botanical curiosity with which it inspires me, but rather because the presence of this exotic palm has a significance. It illustrates a point in the character of him—it may be *her*—who is the presiding spirit of the place. No doubt there is a fair garden upon the azotea—perhaps a fair being among its flowers! Pleasant thoughts spring up—anticipations. I long to climb that sloping hill, to enter that splendid mansion, and, longing still, I gaze.

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The ring of a bugle reminds me of my duties. 'Tis but a stable-call; but it has driven those sweet reflections out of my mind, and my eyes are turned away from the bright mansion, and rest upon the plazza of the pueblita. There, a far different scene greets their glance.

CHAPTER III.

THE RANGERS ON PICKET

The centre of the plazza presents a salient point in the picture. There the well (*el poso*), with its gigantic wheel, its huge leathern belt and buckets, its trough of cemented stone-work, offers an oriental aspect. Verily, it is the Persian wheel! 'Tis odd to a northern eye, particularly to find such a structure in this western land; but the explanation is easy. That idea has travelled from Egypt along the southern shores of the Mediterranean. With the Moors it crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and the Spaniard has carried it over the Atlantic. The reader of the sacred volume will find many a familiar passage illustrated in the customs of Mexico. The genius of the Arab has shaped many a thought for the brain of the Aztec!

My eye rests not long upon the Persian wheel, but turns to gaze on the scene of active life that is passing around it. Forms, and varied ones, I trow, are moving there.

Gliding with silent step and dubious look—his wide *calzoneros* flapping around his ankles, his arms and shoulders shrouded in the mottled serapé, his black broad-brimmed hat darkening still more his swarth face—goes the *poblano*, the denizen of the adobé hut. He shuns the centre of the plazza, keeping around the walls; but at intervals his eyes are turned towards the well with a look of mingled fierceness and fear. He reaches a doorway—it is silently opened by a hand within—he enters quickly, and seems glad to get out of sight. A little after, I can catch a glimpse of his sombre face dimly outlined behind the bars of the reja. At distant corners, I descry small groups of his class—all similarly costumed in calzoneros, striped blankets, and glaze hats; all, like him, wearing uneasy looks. They gesticulate little, contrary to their usual habit, and converse only in whispers or low mutterings. Unusual circumstances surround them.

Most of the women are within doors; a few of the poorer class—of pure Indian race—are seated in the plazza. They are hucksters, and their wares are spread before them on a thin palm-leaf mat (*petaté*), while another similar one, supported umbrella-like on a stem, screens them and their merchandise from the sun. Their dyed woollen garments, their bare heads, their coarse black hair, adorned with twists of scarlet worsted, give them somewhat of a gipsy look. They appear as free of care as the zingali themselves: they laugh, and chatter, and shew their white teeth all day long, asking each new-comer to purchase their fruits and vegetables, their *piñolé*, *atolé*, and *agua dulce*. Their not unmusical voices ring pleasantly upon the ear.

Now and then a young girl, with red *olla* poised upon her crown, trips lightly across the plazza in the direction of the well. Perhaps she is a *poblana*, one of the belles of the village, in short-skirted, bright-coloured petticoat, embroidered but sleeveless chemisette, with small satin slippers upon her feet; head, shoulders, and bosom shrouded in the blue-gray *reboso;* arms and ankles bare. Several of these are seen passing to and fro. They appear less uneasy than the men; they even smile at intervals, and reply to the rude badinage uttered in an unknown tongue by the odd-looking strangers around the well. The Mexican women are courageous as they are amiable. As a race, their beauty is undeniable.

But who are these strangers? They do not belong to the place, that is evident; and equally clear it is that they are objects of terror to those who do. At present, they are masters here. Their numbers, their proud confident swagger, and the bold loud tone of their conversation, attest that they are masters of the ground. Who are they? Odd-looking, I have styled them; and the phrase is to be taken in its full significance. A more odd-looking set of fellows never mustered in a Mexican plazza, nor elsewhere.

There are fourscore of them; and but that each carries a yäger rifle in his hand, a knife in his belt, and a Colt's pistol on his thigh, you could not discover the slightest point of resemblance between any two of them. Their arms are the only things about them denoting *uniformity*, and some sort of organisation; for the rest, they are as unlike one another as the various shapes and hues of coarse broadcloth, woollen jeans, cottonades, coloured blankets, and buckskin, can make them. They wear caps of 'coon-skin, and cat's-skin, and squirrel; hats of beaver, and felt, and glaze, of wool and palmetto, of every imaginable shape and slouch. Even of the modern monster—the silken 'tile'—samples might be seen, *badly crushed*. There are coats of broadcloth, few in number, and well worn; but many are the garments of 'Kentucky jeans,' of bluish-gray, of copper-coloured nigger-cloth, and sky-coloured cottonade. Some wear coats made of green blankets, others of blue ones, and some of a scarlet red. There are hunting-shirts of dressed deerskin, with plaited skirt, and cape, fringed and jauntily adorned with beads and embroidery—the favourite style of the backwoods' hunter; but others there are of true Indian cut—open only at the throat, and hanging loose, or fastened around the waist with a belt—the same that secures the knife and pistol. There are cloth jackets too, such as are worn by sailors, and others, of sky-blue cottonade—the costume of the Creole of Louisiana; some of red-brown leather—the *jaqueta* of the Spano-American; and still another fashion, the close-fitting embroidered 'spencer' of the Mexican ranchero. Some shoulders are covered by serapés, and some by the more graceful and toga-like manga. Look lower down: examine the limbs of the men of this motley band: the covering of these is not less varied than their upper garments. You see wrappers of coarse cloth, of flannel, and of baize; they are blue, and scarlet, and green. You see leggings of raw hide and of buckskin; boots of horse-leather reaching to the thighs; 'nigger boots' of still coarser fabric, with the pantaloons tucked under; *brogans* of unstained calf-skin, and moccasins of varied cut, betokening the fashion of more than one Indian tribe. You may see limbs incased in calzoneros, and others in the heavy stamped leather *botas* of the Mexican horseman, resembling the greaves of warriors of the olden time.

The heels of all are armed, though their armature is as varied as the costumes. There are spurs of silver and steel, some plated, and some with the plating worn off; some strapped, and others screwed into the heel of the boot; some light, with small rowels and tiny teeth, while others are seen (the heavy spur of Mexico) of several pounds' weight, with rowels five inches in diameter, and teeth that might be dashed through the ribs of a horse! — cruel weapons of the Mexican *cavallero.*

But these spurs in the plazza, these botas and calzoneros, these mangas and serapés, are not worn by *Mexicans.* Their present wearers are men of a different race. Most of those tall, stalwart bodies are the product of the maize-plant of Kentucky and Tennessee, or the buckwheat and 'hog-meat' of the fertile flats of Ohio, Indiana, and the Illinois. They are the squatters and hunters of the backwoods, the farmers of the great western slopes of the Alleghanies, the boatmen of the Mississippi, the pioneers of Arkansas and Missouri, the trappers of prairie-land, the *voyageurs* of the lake-country, the young planters of the lower states, the French Creoles of Louisiana, the adventurous settlers of Texas, with here and there a gay city spark from the larger towns of the 'great west.' Yes, and from other sources are individuals of that mixed band. I recognise the Teutonic type—the fair hair and whitish-yellow moustache of the German, the florid Englishman, the staid Scot, and his contrast the noisy Hibernian; both equally brave. I behold the adroit and nimble Frenchman, full of laugh and chatter, the stanch soldierly Swiss, and the moustached exile of Poland, dark, sombre, and silent. What a study for an ethnologist is that band of odd-looking men! Who are they?

You have thrice asked the question. I answer it: They are a corps of '*Rangers*'—a guerilla of the American army.

And who am I? Their captain—their chief.

Yes, I am the leader of that queer crew; and, despite their rough motley aspect, I dare affirm, that not in Europe, not in America elsewhere, not upon the great globe's surface, can be found a band, of like numbers, to equal them in strength, daring, and warlike intelligence. Many of them have spent half a life in the sharpening practice of border warfare — Indian or Mexican—and from these the others have learnt. Some have been gentlemen upon whom fortune has frowned; a few have been desperadoes within the pale of civilised life; and a smaller few, perhaps, *outlaws* beyond it—bad materials wherewith to *colonise*; not so bad, if you go but to *conquer.*

Rude as is the *coup d'œil* of the corps, I am proud to say that a high sentiment of honour pervades it, higher than will be found in the picked *corps de garde* of an emperor. True, they appear rough and reckless—terrible, I might say; for most of them—with their long beards and hair, dust-begrimed faces, slouched hats, and odd habiliments, belted as they are with knife, pistol, powder-horn, and pouch—present such an aspect, that you would wrong them to take them as they look. Few among them are the pure bandits whose aim is plunder. Many a noble heart beats beneath a rude exterior—many a one truly humane. There are hearts in that band that throb under the influence of patriotism; some are guided by a still nobler impulse, a desire to extend the area of freedom; others, it is true, yearn but for revenge. These last are chiefly Texans, who mourn a friend or brother slain by Mexican treachery. They have not forgotten the cowardly assassination of Goliad; they remember the red butchery of the Alamo.

Perhaps I alone, of all the band, have no motive for being here; if one, 'tis slight—scarce so noble as vengeance. Mere chance, the love of excitement and adventure, perhaps some weak fondness for power and fame, are all the excuses I can urge for taking a hand in this affair. A poor adventurer, without friends, without home, without country—for my native land is no more a nation—my heart is not cheered by a single throb of patriotism. I have no private wrong to redress, no public cause, no country for which to combat.

During intervals of inaction, these thoughts recur to me, and give me pain.

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The men have picketed their horses in the church enclosure; some are tied to trees, and others to the reja-bars of the windows: like their riders, a motley group, various in size, colour, and race. The strong high-mettled steed of Kentucky and Tennessee, the light 'pacer' of Louisiana, the cob, the barb, his descendant the 'mustang,' that but a few weeks ago was running wild upon the prairies, may all be seen in the troop. Mules, also, of two distinct races—the large gaunt mule of North America, and the smaller and more sprightly variety, native of the soil.

My own black steed, with his pretty fern-coloured muzzle, stands near the fountain in the centre of the plazza. My eye wanders with a sort of habitual delight over the oval outlines of his body. How proudly he curves his swan-like neck, and with mock anger paws up the dust! He knows that my eyes are upon him.

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We have been scarcely an hour in the rancheria; we are perfect strangers to it: we are the first American troop its people have yet seen, although the war has been going on for some months further down the river. We have been sent here upon picket-duty, with orders to scour the surrounding country as far as it is safe. The object in sending us hither is not so much to guard against a surprise from our Mexican foe, who is not upon this side, but to guard *them,* the Mexicans, from another enemy—an enemy of *both of us*—the Comanche! These Indian Ishmaelites, report says, are upon the '*war-trail,*' and have quite an army in the field. It is said they are foraging further up the river, where they have it all to themselves, and have just pillaged a settlement in that direction—butchered the men, as is their wont, and carried off the women, children, and chattels. We came hither to conquer the Mexicans, but we must *protect* while *conquering* them! *Cosas de Mexico!*

CHAPTER IV.

MAKING A CAPTIVE.

I was musing upon the singular character of this *triangular* war, when my reverie was disturbed by the hoof-strokes of a horse. The sounds came from a distance, outside the village; the strokes were those of a horse at full gallop.

I stepped hastily across the azotea, and looked over the parapet, in hopes of obtaining a view of this rapid rider. I was not disappointed—the road and the rider came full under my eyes.

In the latter, I beheld a picturesque object. He appeared to be a very young man—a mere youth, without beard or moustache, but of singularly handsome features. The complexion was dark, almost brown; but even at the distance of two hundred yards, I could perceive the flash of a noble eye, and note a damask redness upon his cheeks. His shoulders were covered with a scarlet manga, that draped backward over the hips of his horse; and upon his head he wore a light sombrero, laced, banded, and tasselled with bullion of gold. The horse was a small but finely proportioned mustang, spotted like a jaguar upon a ground colour of cream—a true Andalusian.

The horseman was advancing at a gallop, without fear of the ground before him: by chance, his eyes were raised to the level of the azotea, on which I stood; my uniform, and the sparkle of my accoutrements, caught his glance; and quick as thought, as if by an involuntary movement, he reined up his mustang, until its ample tail lay clustered upon the dust of the road. It was then that I noted the singular appearance of both horse and rider.

Just at that moment, the ranger, who held picket on that side of the village, sprang forth from his hiding-place, and challenged the horseman to halt. The challenge was unheeded. Another jerk of the rein spun the mustang round, as upon a pivot, and the next instant, impelled by the spur, the animal resumed his gallop. He did not return by the road, but shot off in a new direction, nearly at right angles to his former course. A rifle-bullet would have followed, and most likely have stopped the career of either horse or rider, had not I, just in the nick of time, shouted to the sentry to hold his fire.

A reflection had occurred to me: the game was too noble, too beautiful, to be butchered by a bullet; it was worth a chase and a capture.

My horse was by the water-trough. I had noticed that he was not yet unsaddled, and the bridle was still on. He had been warmed by the morning's scout; and I had ordered my negro groom to walk him round for an hour or so before letting him at the water.

I did not wait to descend by the *escalera;* I sprang upon the parapet, and from that into the plazza. The groom, perceiving my intention, met me half-way with the horse. I seized the reins, and bounded into the saddle. Several of the readiest of the rangers followed my example; and as I galloped down the lane that led out of the rancheria, I could tell by the clattering of hoofs that half a dozen of them were at my heels. I cared not much for that, for surely I was a match for the stripling we meant to chase. I knew, moreover, that speed at the moment was of more importance than strength; and that if the spotted horse possessed as much 'bottom' as he evidently did 'heels,' his rider and I would have it to ourselves in the end. I knew that all the horses of my troop were less swift than my own; and from the half-dozen springs I had witnessed on the part of the mustang, I felt satisfied that it remained only for me to overhaul him.

My springing down from the roof and up into the saddle had occupied scarcely two minutes' time; and in two more, I had cleared the houses, and was scouring across the fields after the scarlet horseman. He was evidently making to get round the village, and continue the journey our presence had so suddenly interrupted.

The chase led through a field of *milpas* (maize). My horse sank deeply in the loose earth, while the lighter mustang bounded over it like a hare: he was distancing me. I began to fear I would lose him, when all at once I saw that his course was intercepted by a list of magueys, running transversely right and left. The plants were of luxuriant growth, eight or ten feet high, and placed alternately, so that their huge hooked blades interlocked with each other, forming a natural *chevaux-de-frise.*

This barrier at first glance seemed impassable for either man or horse. It brought the Mexican to a halt. He was turning to skirt it, when he perceived that I had leaned into the diagonal line, and could not fail to head him. With a quick wrench upon the rein, he once more wheeled round, set his horse against the magueys, plied the spur, and dashed right into their midst. In a moment more, both horse and rider were out of sight; but as I spurred up to the spot, I could hear the thick blades crackle under the hoofs of the mustang.

There was no time for reflection. I must either follow, or abandon the pursuit. The alternative was not thought of. I was on my honour, my steed upon his mettle; and without halt we went plunging through the magueys.

Torn and bleeding, we came out on the opposite side; and I perceived, to my satisfaction, that I had made better time than the red rider before me: his halt had lessened the distance between us. But another field of milpas had to be passed, and he was again gaining upon me, as we galloped over the heavy ground. When nearly through the field, I perceived something glancing before us: it was water—a wide drain or ditch, a *zequia* for irrigating the field. Like the magueys, it ran transversely to our course.

'That will stop him,' thought I; 'he must take to the right or left, and then'——

My thoughts were interrupted. Instead of turning either to right or left, the Mexican headed his horse at the zequia, and the noble creature rushing forward, rose like a bird upon the wing, and cleared the canal!

I had no time to expend in admiring the feat; I hastened to imitate it, and galloping forward, I set myself for the leap. My brave steed needed neither whip nor spur; he had seen the other leap the zequia, and he knew what was expected of him. With a bound, he went over, clearing the drain by several feet; and then, as if resolved upon bringing the affair to an end, he laid his head forward, and stretched himself at race-course speed.

A broad grassy plain—a savannah—lay before us, and the hoofs of both horses, pursuer and pursued, now rang upon hard firm turf. The rest of the chase would have been a simple trial of speed, and I made sure of overhauling the mustang before he could reach the opposite side, when a new obstacle presented itself. A vast herd of cattle and horses studded the savannah throughout its whole extent; these, startled by our wild gallop, tossed their heads, and ran affrighted in every direction, but frequently as otherwise, directly in our way. More than once, I was forced to rein in, to save my neck or my horse's from being broken over a fierce bull or a long horned lumbering ox; and more than once I was compelled to swerve from my course.

What vexed me most, was that in this zigzag race, the mustang, from practice, perhaps, had the advantage; and while it continued, he increased his distance. We cleared the drove at length; but to my chagrin I perceived that we were nearly across the plain. As I glanced ahead, I saw the chapparal near, with taller trees rising over it; beyond, I saw the swell of a hill, with white walls upon its summit. It was the hacienda already mentioned: we were riding directly for it.

I was growing anxious about the result. Should the horseman reach the thicket, I would be almost certain to lose him. *I dared not let him escape.* What would my men say, if I went back without him? I had hindered the sentry from firing, and permitted to escape, perhaps a spy, perhaps some important personage. His desperate efforts to get off favoured the supposition that he was one or the other. *He must be taken!*

Under the impulse of fresh determination, I lanced the flanks of my horse more deeply than ever; he knew what was wanted, and stretched himself to his utmost. There were no more cattle, not an obstacle, and his superior speed soon lessened the distance between himself and the mustang. Ten seconds more would do it.

The ten seconds flew by. I *felt* myself within *shooting* distance; I drew my pistol from its holster.

'*Alto! o yo tiro*' (Halt! or I fire), I cried aloud. There was no reply: the mustang kept on! 'Halt!' I cried again, unwilling to take the life of a fellow-creature—'halt! or you are a dead man!'

No reply again!

There were not six yards between myself and the Mexican. Riding straight behind him, I could have sent a bullet into his back. Some secret instinct restrained me; it was partly, though not altogether, a feeling of admiration,: there was an indefinable idea in my mind at the moment. My finger rested on the trigger, and I could not draw it.

'He must not escape! He is nearing the trees! He must not be allowed to enter the thicket; I shall cripple the horse.'

I looked for a place to aim at; should I hit him in the hips, he might still get off. Where?

At this moment, the animal wheeled, as if guided by his own impulse—perhaps by the knees of his rider—and shot off in a new direction. The object of this manœuvre was to put space between us. So far it was successful; but it gave me just the opportunity to aim as I wanted; and levelling my pistol, I sent a bullet into the kidneys of the mustang. A single plunge forward was his last, and both horse and rider came to the ground.

In an instant the latter had disengaged himself from his struggling steed, and stood upon his feet. Fancying he might still attempt to escape to the thicket, I spurred forward, pistol in hand, and pointed the weapon at his head.

He had no intention either of further flight or resistance; but facing the levelled tube, and looking me full in the face, he said with an air of perfect coolness:

'*No matame, cavallero! Soy muger!*' (Do not kill me, sir! I am a woman!)

NEW-YEAR'S DAY—WHEN?

Among the knotty questions unravelled in the almanacs and calendars, we do not, in our day and in our country, include any relating to the period of each year's commencement—the 'New-year's Day,' popularly so called. Not only are we accustomed from childhood to assign a particular day in a particular month for inaugurating each year, but it would appear a manifest absurdity if such identification were departed from; the beginning of the year, in popular estimation, is as indissolubly associated with the 1st of January as Christmas-day with the 25th of December, or Lady-day with the 25th of March. Persons who possess a little, but only a little familiarity with astronomy, believe that there is something in the planetary movements, the mechanism of the solar system, which determines the precise day whereon the year commences; it is only after somewhat deeper inquiry that this supposition vanishes, and that the mere conventionality of the whole affair becomes apparent. *There is no necessary connection between the 1st of January and the beginning of the year.* This is a curious fact in the history of dates; but a little knowledge of the matter is useful as well as curious, since a due understanding of history and biography, in other times or other countries, often depends in part on a recognition of the calendar adopted.

That this subject is important to the steady readers of history, is made evident by several remarkable circumstances. Irrespective of the confusion arising from the Old Style and the New Style, changes in the day of beginning the year throw a complexity over historical dates. A French chronological work of great authority, *L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*, speaking of the events of the 4th of August 1563, when Charles IX. ordered the year in France to commence on the 1st of January, remarks: 'In relation to periods anterior to this date, nothing is more necessary than to remember the variations in the commencement of the year. Without care on this point, it will not be possible to reconcile various dates, which are nevertheless just and accurate in themselves; and there will be a constant liability to meet with apparent embarrassments where no errors in reality exist.' Let the reader ask himself whether he is prepared to answer the two following questions:—Was Charles I. beheaded in 1648 or 1649? Was James II. driven from the throne in 1688 or 1689? Of course, every one will expect to find these questions solved by referring to any of the familiar histories of England; but when he is informed that both pairs of dates are adopted, and that *both are right*, the importance of the matter becomes somewhat more apparent. Dipping into a pamphlet written by Henry Wilson in 1735, we find the following:—'While we are maintaining the beginning of the year according to the rubric of the Common Prayer, we seem to forget that our year begins on the 1st of January, both in our common licensed almanacs and even in the Book of Common Prayer itself; and it may mount to a question very difficult to be answered, why the rubric of the Common Prayer enjoins the year to begin on the 25th of March, and yet the column for the lessons, &c., begins on the 1st of January.' This shews how matters stood in those times.

What little philosophy there is in the question, lies in a nut-shell. That the period occupied by the earth in making one revolution on its axis should be adopted as a measure of time, the 'day,' seems reasonable enough; that the period occupied by the moon in making a circuit round the earth, from new moon to new moon, should be adopted as another measure of time, the 'lunation' or 'month,' is equally reasonable; and there is needed no great depth of scientific knowledge to perceive and admit, that a complete revolution of the seasons, during which the sun appears to travel round a whole circle in the heavens, supplies a convenient measure for a larger portion of time, the 'year.' But in this last-named period there are two sources of uncertainty—a difficulty in determining the exact number of days and fractions of days contained in a year; and a freedom of choice as to the particular day on which the year shall be said to begin. The first of these two difficulties has been lessened by the progressive advance of astronomical science; but the second remains, as it has ever been, at the mercy of conventionalism. Shall the year begin on the day when the sun attains his highest noon-altitude, or his lowest noon-altitude; or when he is at his greatest distance from the earth, or at his least distance, or at his mean distance; or in the particular season when day and night are equal all over the globe; or on a church-festival day; or on any other day? Who has a right to decide this question, and to demand that others shall agree with him?

Looking at past records, it will be seen how discordant have been the arrangements in this behoof. The letters A.U.C. in books on Roman history—*ab urbe condita*, 'from the building of the city'—give us a clue to the calendar first employed by that remarkable people. It was a tradition that Romulus founded Rome on April 21, and this day was reckoned as a date to start from; but several changes were afterwards made in the selection of New-year's Day by priests who knew little of astronomy. In Cæsar's time, the year began in autumn; but he ordained a monster year of 445 days, in 47 B.C., in order that New-year's Day might begin in winter—thereby shewing that it depends on the choice of man, and not on the course of the heavenly bodies, whether the year shall begin on this or that day.

It is curious that the Roman A.U.C. refers to nearly the same epoch as that selected for the commencement of the Greek *Olympiads*—nearly eight hundred years before the birth of Christ. The Olympiad was a period of four years—so confused as to the number of moons or months contained in each year, that the date of New-year's Day was continually fluctuating. After forty Olympiads had passed, an adjustment was made whereby the year began between the days of new and full moon nearest to the summer solstice. Professor de Morgan, who has investigated this subject more fully, perhaps, than any other man living, cannot give classical readers more precise information than this—that the Greek year began 'within a fortnight of the beginning of July.'

When Christianity progressed and spread through Europe, it seemed fitting that men should associate the beginning of the year with some great festival in their religion, seeing that astronomy could not determine the matter; yet such was the confusion in the ancient and medieval calendars, that many centuries elapsed before there was any definite understanding in Europe that the year should begin on the 1st of January. There were occasional discussions, too, concerning the day on which Christ was born; and, moreover, some persons reckoned the year immediately before the birth of Christ as 1 B.C., while others gave that designation to a period one year earlier. Thus there was frequently an ambiguity both in the year of the Christian era, and in the particular day on which each year was considered to begin.

Most readers know something concerning the Old Style and New Style—how that, for a thousand years or more, the Christian ecclesiastical year had been about eleven minutes too long, and that this trifling excess had accumulated to ten days; how that Pope Gregory XIII., to cure the evil, ordered that the year 1582 should contain 355 days only, in order that the Church fasts and feasts should come round again to the proper seasons of the year. All the Roman Catholic countries at once adopted this New Style, as it was termed; the Protestants of Germany gave in their adhesion in 1699, and those of England in 1752. Certain days in October 1582 were left out by the Roman Catholics, in December 1699 by the Germans, and in September 1752 by the English. The error, amounting to ten days in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, accumulated to eleven in the eighteenth, and is, or would have been twelve in the present century. The Greek Church, pertinaciously opposed to the Romish on many points, has to this day refused to adopt the Gregorian correction: it still adheres to the Old Style. This circumstance has led to some confusion in the records of the late war.[*] To us, the battle of Inkermann was fought on the 5th of November, but a Russian would date it October 24. Although *nominally* the year, in Roman Catholic Europe, both before and after the change of style, began on the 1st of January, yet the real day, the day in relation to the earth's orbital motion, was obviously different. In England, however, the change was both nominal and real; for besides the omission of eleven days in 1752, the legal year underwent a separate modification.

During past centuries, although most European nations adopted the arrangements ordered by the papal authorities concerning the length and division of the year, yet the selection of New-year's Day remained strangely discordant. In some countries, it was Easter-day; in others, Lady-day; in others, March 1; in others, Christmas-day; while in others there were actually different dates adopted in different provinces of the same country.

Let any one, who might conceive it to be an easy thing to settle such problems as mere dates, consider for a moment the confusion in the supposed age of the world. Most English writers on religious subjects in recent times set down 4004 years between the creation of the world and the birth of Christ; but theologians have counted up no less than *a hundred and forty* theories or estimates, ranging from a minimum of 3616 years to a maximum of 6484. Hence arose the discrepancies between the various 'eras;' such as those of Constantinople (during its Christian period), Antioch, Alexandria, Abyssinia, &c. As the eras differed, so did the New-year's Day. The Abyssinians feel so certain, or speak so boldly, on these matters, that they actually name the very day of creation, equivalent to August 29, 5493 years before the Christian era; and the anniversary of this date they select as their New-year's Day.

Nations which have not adopted the Christian faith are of course exempt from certain obligations which would appear binding on others. The Jewish civil New-year's Day has an astronomical basis, since it occurs on or immediately after the day of new moon following the autumnal equinox.

In our own country, the question has stood thus: From the seventh to the thirteenth centuries, the year was considered to begin on Christmas-day; but from thence to the middle of the eighteenth century, it was celebrated on the 25th of March. All this was in relation to the *ecclesiastical* and *legal* year, but not to the year of the historians and the common people, which from very early times began on the 1st of January. The Church wavered and hesitated between four of her festivals—the birth of Christ (December 25), the Circumcision (January 1), the Conception (March 25), and the resurrection or Easter (variable), as the beginning of the year, until a final settlement in 1752. Scotland settled the question in 1599, in a document which is worth reprinting if only as a specimen of old Scottish orthography:

'Apud Haliruidhous, xvij Decembris—mvlxxxxix.

'The first day of the yeir appointit to be the first day of Januar yeirlie.

'The Kingis Majestie, and Lordis of His Secreit Counsall, undirstanding that in all utheris weill governit commoun welthis and cuntreyis, the first day of the yeir begynis yeirlie upoun the first day of Januar commonlie callit New Yeris day, and that this realme onlie is different fra all utheris in the compt and reckining of the yeiris: And His Majestie and Counsall willing that thair salbe na disconformitie betwix His Majestie, his realme and leigis, and utheris nichtbour cuntreyis in this particular, bot that thay sal conforme thameselffis to the ordour and custum observit be al utheris cuntreyis, especialie seing the course and seasoun of the yeir is maist propire and ansuerabill thairto, and that the alteration thairof importis na hurte nor prejudice to ony pairtie: Thairfoir His Majestie, with advice of the Lordis of his Secreit Counsall, statutis and ordanis, That in all tyme cumyng, the first day of the yeir sal begin yeirlie upoun the first day of Januar, and thir presentis to tak execution upoun the first of Januar nixtocum, quhilk salbe the first day of the IM and six hundredth yeir of God: And thairfoir ordanis and commandis the clerkis of his Hienis Sessioun and Signet,' &c. &c. It ends by ordaining 'publication to be made heirof at the Mercat Croceis of the heid burrowis of the realme, quhairthrow nane pretend ignorance of the same.'

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[*] 'It is frequently necessary, in Russian documents, to give a double date. This arises from the fact, that Russia still retains the Old Style, which England abandoned in 1752, and which has been abandoned by most other nations. June 14, in Russia, corresponds with June 26 in England. In any double date, the *earlier* of the two dates is Russian.'—*Chambers's Pictorial History of the Russian War*, p. 20.

The reader will now see in what way complexity might arise concerning the two events in English history before adverted to. If Charles I. had been beheaded two months later, ecclesiastics and historians would have agreed in assigning the event to the year 1649; but as the day in question (January 30) occurred *before* the ecclesiastical New-year's Day (March 25) it was reckoned in legal and church phraseology as belonging to 1648, while historians and the public set it down as 1649. If James II. had landed in Ireland, on his futile expedition to recover his throne, a week or two later, all writers would have assigned the year 1689 to mark this event; but as it occurred early in March, it belonged to the ecclesiastical year 1688. And so of all dates between the 1st of January and the 25th of March; each date belonged to two different years, according as the historical or the legal and ecclesiastical computation was adopted. This explains the meaning of such entries as January 30, $164\substack{8\\9}$, or 1648-9, or February 6, $1\substack{699\\700}$, found in a multitude of publications issued a century and a half or two centuries ago: the upper or smaller number gives the date used in formal documents relating to legal and church matters; and the undermost or greater number expresses the date as used by historians, traders, and the public generally—by all, in short, who accepted the 1st of January as New-year's Day. Fortunately, it has been the custom among most of the English historians, and all of them in recent times, to adopt the popular New-year's Day in their computations; but readers accustomed to an older literature cannot afford to be off their guard in relation to any event occurring during the first three months of the year: the strange equation 1648=1649 stares them in the face.

It will be inferred, from the details above given, that other countries have not been free from the anomalies observable in our own. In France, from the days of Charlemagne to the eleventh century, New-year's Day was on Christmas-day; thence, until the sixteenth century, regal documents assumed the year to begin at Easter, after the benediction of the Holy Candle on Holy Saturday or Easter-eve, and consequently varied from year to year. Some of the French provinces at the same time adopted Lady-day; but at length the 1st of January was formally declared to be New-year's Day, by edict of Charles IX., in 1563. In Germany, the New Year anciently commenced on Christmas-day; it varied much during the middle ages; but the 1st of January became pretty generally adopted about the beginning of the sixteenth century. In Denmark, the New Year in early times was appointed on the 11th of August, the natal-day of a saint whose memory was much cherished; but this was afterwards changed for the 1st of January. In Italy, it is scarcely possible to unravel the confusion in different states between Christmas-day, the 1st of March, Lady-day, and Easter-day, until the final adoption of the 1st of January as the beginning of the year. In Russia, even to the present time, there has been an ecclesiastical New-year's Day, differing widely from that adopted in civil affairs. In Spain, Lady-day was adopted till the fourteenth century; then Christmas-day till the sixteenth; and then the 1st of January. In the Low Countries, Good Friday was added to the above list in early times; but the modern commencement was accepted in the sixteenth century.

Thus, then, we find that the right, true, orthodox, familiar, popular, domestic, boys' and girls' 1st of January has had a series of hard battles to fight, ere it could obtain a European recognition of its claim to the honours and dignity of New-year's Day.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

AN OLD QUESTION IN A NEW ASPECT.

'RACE! Do not speak to us of race—we care nothing for breed or colour. What we contend for is, that slavery, whether of black or white, is a normal, a proper institution in society.' So proclaim southern writers in the United States. The principle of enslaving only coloured persons, descendants of imported Africans, is now antiquated, and a scheme which embraces slavery of every race and variety of complexion is at length put forward as a natural and desirable arrangement for all parties—a highly commendable state of things. Any one could have foreseen that it must come to this. The prodigious and irregular amalgamation of races in the south, with the deterioration and helplessness of the less affluent class of whites in the slaveholding states, has, as may be supposed, led to a pretty nearly pure, nay, absolutely pure breed of white slaves. A new style of reasoning is consequently required. If slavery is to be at all vindicated, it must not now be on the narrow basis of colour, but on the broad grounds, that there is an inherent right in the stronger and more wealthy classes to reduce the poorer, and, it may be, more ignorant orders to a state of perpetual bondage. The cool announcement of this extraordinary doctrine, from influential parties in a great thriving republic, strikes one with so much wonder, that we almost inquire if we have heard aright, or if we are really living in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The most casual glance at the products of the southern press leaves no room for doubt on the subject. A few scraps cannot but be classed among the curiosities of modern literature. Mr Fitzhugh, a southern writer, says: 'We do not adopt the theory that Ham was the ancestor of the negro race. The Jewish slaves were not negroes, and to confine the justification of slavery to that of race, would be to weaken the scriptural authority, and to lose the whole weight of profane authority; for we read of no negro slavery in ancient times. Slavery, black or white, is right and necessary.' The *Richmond Inquirer*, an able Virginian paper, says: 'Until recently, the defence of slavery has laboured under great difficulties, because its apologists—for they were mere apologists—took half-way grounds. They confined the defence of slavery to mere negro slavery; thereby giving up the slavery principle, admitting other forms of slavery to be wrong. The line of defence is now changed. The south now maintains that slavery is right, natural, and necessary. While it is far more obvious that negroes should be slaves than whites—for they are only fit to labour, not to direct—yet the principle of slavery is itself right, and does not depend on difference of complexion.'

Mr G. W. Weston, a writer in the cause of emancipation in the *New York Tribune*, observes: 'It is not true, in law or in fact, that the condition of slavery at the south is confined to the African race. The principle of American slavery which distinguishes it from the slavery of patriarchal times, and from oriental slavery at this day, is, that where the mother is enslaved, the offspring follow the condition of the mother. The female slaves, exposed of necessity to the disorderly passions of the whites, are made the instruments through whom the Caucasian race is itself reduced to the condition of servitude. The blood of orators, statesmen, generals, and even presidents, flows in the veins of thousands who are bought and sold like mules and horses. The time is not distant when the genuine unmixed African will not be found at the south. He is already rare, although it is less than half a century since the prohibition of the foreign slave-trade.' Besides the source of whiteness above referred to, it is understood that numbers of purely Anglo-American children pass into slavery. In some instances, the indigent whites of the south sell their children to traders; and the practice of kidnapping white children in the northern states, and transferring them southward, is said to be notoriously on the increase. We see it mentioned that, in the city of New York alone, as many as thirty children on an average are stolen yearly; it being shrewdly guessed that many of them are carried to the markets of the south, where a good price for them can be readily obtained. If there be the slightest truth in the supposition that gently nurtured white infants are so abstracted from the homes of their parents, nothing could give a more forcible impression of the horrors entailed on American society by the tolerance of slavery within its bosom.

It has been customary to blame England for having, in the first instance, introduced negro slavery into the States; but, admitting to its full extent her guilt in the slave-trade, we can hardly see how her doings in this respect are to be consistently condemned, if American writers be sincere in thinking that slavery is a normal and absolutely necessary institution. From the sentiments lately avowed, it would appear that there can be no right condition of affairs without slaves. Free labour is spoken of as improper, and a thing that must end in national disaster. The only security is for every man who has the means to buy slaves, and get all his work done by them. A widely circulated newspaper—the *New Orleans Delta*—says: 'We have a proposition to lay down that may appear startling to many because it is new, but will have weight and consideration with the thinking, inasmuch as it is based on both philosophy and experience. We therefore declare that slavery is not only national in its origin, but it is essential to republican nationality. But for slavery, republicanism would have long since become a tale in these United States. It is among the slaveholding population that republicanism has had its true home and only defence. It is they who have made the Union what it is commercially and politically. It is only they who can hereafter maintain a safe and honourable union, and enjoy rational liberty. History is instructive; heed its teachings; they are invariable and unerring. It tells us that a great republic never existed without slavery. It tells us that where partial and defined slavery did not exist of law, the mass of the working-people have been slaves, and worse than slaves. It tells us that wherever universal freedom has nominally existed, poverty, want, and possible famine, and humiliating dependency of the poor on the rich, have been the price of painted delusion. Slavery was an institution in all the ancient republics, but in two we have eminent examples. In Rome, the mightiest in arms, and Athens, the most glorious in art of all the old republics, slavery prevailed to a greater extent than in any state of the Union. In Athens, the proportion of slaves to freemen was about two to one—in Rome, scarcely less; and yet with this institution imbedded in their very hearts, they lived and flourished, century after century, and reached a magnificence and grandeur of which the history of modern free society affords no example. Modern free society, as at present organised, is radically wrong and rotten. It is self-destroying, and can never exist happily and normally until it is qualified by the introduction of some principle equivalent in effect to the institution of negro slavery. In the northern states, free society has proved a failure. It is rotten to the core. Let the dominion which its putrescence has engendered succeed, and society, with its most sacred sanctions and its holiest institutions, will fall before it, both in the north and south, and the country must become the seat of howling anarchy or iron despotism. Negro slavery, then, is the conservative element of republicanism, and the firmest basis of society in these United States. Such being the social and political value of slavery, its diffusion and extension are of the first importance, and nothing at the present time should more nearly interest the wise philanthropist and the patriotic statesman, than to devise measures to effect these objects—to restore slavery to its original national character, and make it an object of political solicitude.'

These notions are far from singular. By several writers, freedom is spoken of with coarse contempt. 'Free society!' says the *Muscogree Herald*, an Alabama newspaper, in the interest of the new president. 'We sicken at the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists? All the northern, and especially the New England States, are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets with is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel, and small farmers who do their own drudgery, and yet who are hardly fit for association with a southern gentleman's body-servant. This is your free society, which the northern hordes are endeavouring to extend into Kansas.' It would be unjust to lay too much stress on the grotesque ravings of an obscure print, did they not find an echo in the *Richmond Inquirer*, a paper which, as already hinted, is conducted with no mean ability. 'Repeatedly,' says its editor, 'have we asked the north—Has not the experiment of universal liberty failed? Are not the evils of free society insufferable? and do not most thinking men among you propose to subvert and reconstruct it? Still no answer. This gloomy silence is another conclusive proof, added to many other conclusive evidences we have furnished, that free society in the long run is an impracticable form of society; it is everywhere starving, demoralised, and insurrectionary. We repeat, then, that policy and humanity alike forbid the extension of the evils of free society to new people and coming generations. Two opposite and conflicting forms of society cannot, among civilised men, co-exist and endure. The one must give way, and cease to exist; the other become universal. If free society be unnatural, immoral, unchristian, it must fall, and give way to slave society—a social system, old as the world, universal as man.' It would seem that the measure of public liberty which Washington fought for and achieved is a blunder; and that for the much-venerated free institutions of the States, must be substituted the mixture of aristocracy and helotism of the ancient world.

Another well-known Virginian print, the *Richmond Examiner*, about two years ago came out with a flat contradiction of there being any longer a desire to see the country clear of slavery. 'It is all a hallucination to suppose that we are ever going to get rid of African slavery, or that it will ever be desirable to do so. It is a thing that we cannot do without—that is *righteous*, *profitable*, and permanent, and that belongs to southern society as inherently, intricately, and durably as the white race itself. Yea, the white race will itself emigrate from the southern states to Africa, California, or Polynesia, sooner than the African. Let us make up our minds, therefore, to put up with and make the most of the institution. Let us not bother our brains about what *Providence* intends to do with our negroes in the distant future, but glory in and profit to the utmost by what He has done for them in transplanting them here, and setting them to work on our plantations. Let the politicians and planters of the south, while encouraging the "Baptists and Methodists"—and other denominations having a less number of votes—in Christianising the negro, keep their slaves at hard work, under strict discipline, out of idleness and mischief, while they live; and when they come to die, instead of sending them off to Africa, or manumitting them to a life of "freedom," licentiousness, and nuisance, will them over to their children, or direct them to be sold where they will be made to work hard, and be of service to their masters and to the country. True philanthropy to the negro begins, like charity, at home; and if southern men would act as if the canopy of heaven were inscribed with a covenant, in letters of fire, that *the negro is here, and here for ever; is our property, and ours for ever; is never to be emancipated; is to be kept hard at work, and in rigid subjection all his days;* and is never to go to Africa, to Polynesia, or to Yankee Land—far worse than either—they would accomplish more good for the race in five years than they boast the institution itself to have accomplished in two centuries, and cut up by the roots a set of evils and fallacies that threaten to drive the white race a-wandering in the western wilderness, sooner than Cuffee will go to preach the gospel in Guinea.'

We should imagine that to most of our readers these sentiments will come with startling novelty. While the philanthropists of England are pushing forward all sorts of meliorations in social economy, they do not appear to be aware that in the progress of events beyond the Atlantic, views have arisen respecting the slave question which are altogether obstructive of popular freedom, and calculated to reduce every unprotected labourer to the condition of a chattel. 'We have,' says the *South-side Democrat*, a Virginian contemporary of the *Inquirer*—'we have got to hating everything with the prefix *free*, from free negroes down and up through the whole catalogue—free farms, free labour, free society, free will, free thinking, free children, and free schools. But the worst of all these abominations is the modern system of free schools.' The only relief can arise from a return to that blessed state in which the bulk of the population shall be kept in ignorance and servitude under a strong-handed minority—there is, it is alleged, no other means to assuage the poverty incidental to universal competition. All who are unable to maintain their families in decency, had better be at once sold to those who are disposed to take charge of them. 'Sell the parents of these children into slavery. Let our legislature (continues the authority just quoted) pass a law, that whoever will take these parents, and take care of them and their offspring, in sickness and in health, clothe them, feed them, and house them, shall be legally entitled to their services; and let the same legislature decree, that whoever receives these parents and their children, and obtains their services, shall take care of them as long as they live.' We infer from all that is told of the condition of the impoverished 'white trash' in the southern states, that the legislative measures here pointed at would present a natural and not unlikely solution of a somewhat puzzling question. Sanguine as are our expectations of social advancement, under prudent safeguards, who can tell that at least a section of a great nation may not, even in our times, return to the almost forgotten usages of medieval Europe. The world is after all, perhaps, not so vastly improved as one would be inclined to think.

Unlike the serfdom of the middle ages, when war and famine carried off no small share of the redundant population, southern slavery cannot be successfully maintained unless means be found for employing the increase on adjoining lands, or disposing of it for transit to distant settlements. The pressing necessity for extending limited properties into large possessions, is stated to be operating on a gigantic scale in Alabama. The Hon. C. C. Clay, Jun., on lately addressing a Horticultural Society in that great cotton-growing state, laments the absorption of small properties. 'Our wealthier planters,' he observes, 'with greater means, and no more skill, are buying out their poorer neighbours, extending their plantations, and adding to their slave force. Of the 20,000,000 of dollars annually realised from the sales of cotton crop of Alabama, nearly all not expended in supporting the producers is reinvested in land and negroes. Thus, the white population has decreased, and the slave increased, almost *pari passu* in several counties in our state. In 1825, Madison county cast about 3000 votes; now she cannot exceed 2300. In traversing that county, one will discover numerous farmhouses, once the abode of industrious and intelligent freemen, now occupied by slaves, or tenantless, deserted, and dilapidated; he will observe fields once fertile, now unfenced, abandoned; he will see the moss growing on the mouldering walls of once thrifty villages, and will find "one only master grasps the whole domain," that once furnished happy homes for a dozen white families.' To this dismal description, that respectable authority, Olmstead, says that the political experiment of Old Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, is being repeated to the same fatal result in Young Alabama.

The generally blighting influence of slavery is clearly a main cause of its extension. To exist at all, it must push into new regions, everywhere exhausting lands, extinguishing freedom, and dishonouring independent rural industry. Pursued by a fearful Nemesis, the slave-power still seeks for more and more scope for its devastating encroachments. An amount of labour far beyond the bounds of internal supply is in demand. If the great west is to be added piecemeal to the slave states of the Union, the breeding-pens of Virginia will fail to furnish stock except at exorbitant prices. Nothing, accordingly, remains but a legalised revival of the slave-traffic from the coast of Africa, or the legal extension of slavery to the poorer classes of the white population. We have seen what is said of the latter expedient; and a desire to supply the labour-market by the former odious means is likewise expressed in no reserved terms. The *New Orleans Delta* says, on a late occasion, 'we not only desire to make territories, now free, slave territories, and to acquire new territory into which to extend slavery—such as Cuba, North-eastern Mexico, &c.—but we would reopen the African slave-trade, that every white man might have a chance to make himself owner of one or more negroes, and go with them and their household gods wherever opportunity beckoned to enterprise. But the north would never consent to this; they would dissolve the Union rather than grant it, say the croaking impracticables. Gentlemen, you do not know the north, oracular as you look when dubiously shaking your heads. It would not oppose any more bitterly a large demand like this, boldly made, than the smallest one, faintly and politely urged. Try it. There is nothing to lose by the experiment. At all events, if the attempt to reopen this trade should fail, it would give one more proof of how injurious our connection with the north has become to us, and would indicate one more signal advantage which a southern confederacy would have over the present heterogeneous association called the Union.' How the north has deserved that cut! The advantages of a revived African slave-trade were argumentatively pointed out by the *Charleston Standard* so recently as last October. 'From first to last, there has been a constant want of labour. Three millions of our people have perhaps as many slaves as they naturally require; but there are three millions more who are unsupplied. They would take slaves if they could get them; but they are not to be had at prices which will enable them to be used in competition with the free labour of the world. All we have are wanted for agriculture, and even these are not enough. While all are employed, and employed most profitably, lands all over the country are parched and unprofitable for the want of labour, and millions more could have been absorbed. The labour of those brought one year, would have paid for those to be brought the next; as employments opened, white men of enterprise would have come in more abundance than they have done; the stream of labour from Africa would have met a stream of enterprise from Europe; both would have poured in together; the population of the southern states would have been more dense; the population of the northern states would have been more sparse; Georgia would have been to New York as New York is now to Georgia; other states from Texas and New Mexico would have been brought in; and thus, if the slave states had held on to the sources of their real power, the south would have been the Union...... There is now buried under every acre of land in South Carolina at least fifty dollars in gold; and the day that the savage African is landed on our shores to cultivate it, that gold will glitter on its surface.'

It will not be imagined that these wild opinions meet with universal response in the south, where, indeed, many planters above the ordinary standard are conscious of the evils of slavery, and would gladly listen to any reasonable plan for relieving themselves of their coloured dependents. Least of all do such notions meet with approval in the north. But it is not less certain that, from causes not far to seek, a new tone of sentiment has begun to prevail among the general slaveholding interest. What was long lamented and reluctantly endured, is now resolutely maintained, and arguments are found to vindicate its indefinite extension. A social condition in which slavery is a necessary ingredient, is ardently defended by the most able writers of the day. Clergymen of reputation pronounce a glowing eulogium on the institution. According to a report in a New Orleans paper, one of these clerical orators, the Rev. C. R. Marshall, in a speech on education, described slavery 'as contributing to the glory in arts and sciences, in religion, and national prosperity, in all countries wherein it has ever existed . . . he believed slavery to be right, and that within fifty years, instead of decreasing, it would be double in extent to what it now is.' Secretly disliked as such opinions may possibly be, they meet with little open challenge, either north or south; and looking only to practical results, it is observed that the extreme party which denounces free labour, and ostentatiously aims at slavery extension, has, with a marvellous degree of general accord, assumed the entire control of public affairs. By a distinctly marked movement over a period of nearly sixty years —a movement seen better, perhaps, at a distance than near at hand — the grand old spirit of '76, which rolled back the power of England, has obsequiously quailed before the menaces of a body of partisans insignificant in point of numbers, but unscrupulous in the means by which they uphold their remarkable supremacy. W. C.

CHRISTMAS AMONG THE NORSEMEN.

CHRISTMAS, regarded in its social aspect, is pre-eminently a Teutonic festival. Among the Latin and Slavonic races, it is observed as a season of religious joy and thankfulness; among the Norse and Saxon nations alone is it celebrated with social festivity. In Germany, the domestic observance of Christmas is remarkable alike for its childlike physiognomy and its pictorial effect. The Lilliputian fir-tree, with its fairy lights, its glittering gifts, its joyous circle of visitants, all have, of late years, become so familiar to us in our own land, that we stay not to depict them here. Rather would we transport our readers nine hundred years back, to gaze upon a Christmas festivity amidst our Norse forefathers, from whom have been derived many of those social customs which are now entwined within the very heart of Great Britain and its people.

It was towards the close of the tenth century: the scene is laid at Drontheim, within the king of Norway's palace. But let not our readers be misled by these courtly words of 'king' and 'palace,' for in those times the kings of Norway were rather pirate sea-kings than established rulers of the people who owned their sway; and their palaces were merely wooden houses, laid upon a loose stone foundation, and destitute alike of the elegances and luxuries of life.

Only a few years before the period above alluded to, and the winter festival at the 'king's house' in Drontheim was altogether of a heathen character, for he and his bondersmen always met together at mid-winter to celebrate a festival called Yule, in honour of Odin, and so designated from Yeolner, one of his names. It was a time of merriment and good cheer, when horses were slain in sacrifice, and their flesh eaten by the guests. It was also called Höggn Nott* (hewing-night), because of the slaughtering of cattle which then took place. At these feasts, the people drank to excess of ale and mead, emptying goblets in memory of departed friends, and offering remembrance-cups to the gods, praying at the same time for a good season during the ensuing summer. Now, however, all this was at an end, at least within the neighbourhood of King Hakon the Good, who had been educated in England under the care of his foster-father, King Athelstan, and who, on his return to Norway, had introduced Christianity into that country. Most of the people were still heathens at heart; but in obedience to King Hakon's order, 'the Yule, or mid-winter festival, was now to be begun at the same time the Christians kept it, and every man was obliged, under a certain penalty, to brew a meal of malt into ale, and therewith kept the Yule holy as long as it lasted.' The good king hoped thus to 'entice his subjects into Christianity,' a rather questionable mode of procedure in so grave and important a matter; but however ill he may have succeeded in the great object he had in view, the result henceforth was, that Christmas became indissolubly associated in the Norse mind with merry-making and good cheer.

And now that Christianity was in some fashion established in Norway, let us glance for a moment into King Hakon's hall, while he is seated among his chief bondersmen at the Christian Yule feast. It is a spacious but low apartment, built of wood, and wainscotted with the same, having the floor strewed with juniper-tops, which imparted a peculiar fragrance to the whole dwelling. In the centre of the chamber, upon a broad flag, was piled a fire whose smoke partially escaped through a hole in the roof. The huge Yule-log was placed upon the summit of the pile, and shed its fierce and glowing flame upon the guests, who sat upon two long benches at each side of the fire. A lofty seat was placed upon the middle of one of those benches, and there the king sat high above his subjects. The caldron of horseflesh was no longer seen upon the fire, for this viand was so closely associated with heathen rites and heathen worship, that King Hakon had absolutely prohibited its use; but the slaughtered ox had been feasted upon by the guests. And now the drinking-horn was filled with ale, which King Hakon quaffed to his father's memory; and as he rose up reverently for that purpose, his bondersmen gazed upon their king with satisfaction; for not only was he tall and comely in person, but there was also an air of sagacity and decision in his countenance which made him feared as well as loved by his subjects.

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* Hogmanay-night is still the vernacular name in Scotland for the first night of Yule.

Next, there was handed to him a larger horn, filled to the brim with foaming ale. Studs were fixed within it at certain intervals, marking the portion of liquor allotted to each guest. This was called drinking by measure. They handed this horn to each other across the fire, each one drinking in succession to Christ's health—a strange idea this, in our eyes, but in those rude and primitive times this social custom was an open and practical testimony that they had abandoned dead idols for a living Saviour. After this solemn draught, the horn circulated freely among the guests, who now quaffed it without measure during many succeeding hours of the night.

After this rude fashion they feasted day after day, until New-year's-eve, when the king dismissed his guests with handsome presents, giving to the most distinguished persons among them gold-mounted swords, which had been prepared for the occasion.

These festal Christmas customs were introduced by the Northmen into Great Britain, which, during the ninth and tenth centuries, suffered severely from the continual inroads of these hardy and adventurous Norsemen, by whom eventually a large portion of Scotland and of England was populated. They brought with them their deep reverence for law, their true loyalty of heart, and—alas! that there should be a dark shade in the picture—their inordinate love of the foaming horn, now exchanged for the tankard.

Amid all the changes of the last eight or nine hundred years, the merry Christmas of the Norseman still lives on in the hearts and homes of Great Britain; but little do many of our hardy northerns, while placing the Yule-log upon their hearths, imagine that the very word itself may be traced back to the dark ages of heathenism, when their forefathers, instead of eating roast-beef at Christmas, devoured horseflesh in honour of Thor and Odin!

SEVENTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX.

A RETROSPECT ON NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

The final day of the period known and to be chronicled in the world's history as *Anno Domini* 1856, is quickly waning away into the irretrievable region of the past; and the deep-toned bells are ready to announce, with pealing chime, the advent of another January, the first day of a new year—a day of solemn and serious consideration, if you will, yet one also of social greetings and innocent enjoyment. In all seemliness and propriety, we may mingle gaiety with gravity, and be merry as well as meditative, while hopefully wending our way by this prominent landmark in the pilgrimage of life; for whatever individual suffering or distress we may have encountered in the passing, or may naturally expect to meet with in the coming year, we can console ourselves with the reflection, that the aggregate amount of human misery is gradually decreasing—that the world is annually becoming wiser, better, and happier. As the careful merchant, at the close of a year, enumerates his stock, balances his books, and congratulates himself on his gains, or sighs over his losses, so it might not be amiss if we made a few inquiries respecting our progress in civilisation and refinement, in the improvement of the individual and society at large. We can do so only by summoning up the past, and comparing it with the present; and though it be true that the coming year opens with fairer prospects than its forerunner, inasmuch as peace is preferable to war, yet a single twelvemonth, however important an item in the lifetime of a man, is but an infinitesimal portion in the age of the world. Consequently, we must, if we wish to estimate properly our advancement or retrogression, include a much greater scope of time. Let us, then, looking back one hundred years, examine the records of 1756, and we shall find that our advance has been prodigious, and learn that all silly maundering about the good old times is worse than nonsense.

Though the French and their savage Indian allies were ravaging the frontiers of our then American colonies—though the governor of Pennsylvania, a British officer and gentleman, was offering a bounty of 150 dollars for every male French or Indian scalp, and the third of that sum for every female one, that could be taken and brought to him—though English ships-of-war were capturing and destroying French merchantmen wherever they could be met with, yet the two nations were at peace—such a peace!—during nearly the first five months of 1756. As heartless Horace Walpole remarks of this period, the English and French ministers were crossing over, and figuring in—in politics. Each country, in fact, was sedulously preparing for war, while deceitfully, or diplomatically, which is much the same sort of thing, endeavouring to gain time by pretending to treat for peace.

There were few newspapers in those days; and indeed there were little if any of that literary, scientific, and social intelligence we now include under the denomination of home news. The leading announcements, referring to domestic affairs, in the journals of 1756, are little more than records of crimes and punishments, and the proceedings of press-gangs. According to our modern notions, London could not have been a very pleasant place to reside in at that time. Highwaymen laboured in their vocation at Knightsbridge; well-guarded mails were stopped, and robbed at Notting Hill. Some parts of the metropolis were continual scenes of riot and disorder. Spitalfields was a complete Alsatia. The denizens, principally weavers of that locality, whom we now associate with ideas of feeble misery and helpless poverty, were then the terror of London. In organised bodies, and armed with cutlasses and bludgeons, these Ishmaels of the gutter fought with hordes of Irish, crowds of soldiers, and crews of sailors; and even afforded a sanctuary to numbers from the formidable press-gang. They were known by the appellation of Cutters, because they levied a frequent black-mail, from the master manufacturers, of four shillings on each loom employed in the district; and if the money were not promptly paid, they cut into pieces the cloth or yarn in process of manufacture. The Cutters reigned till 1769, when their leaders were attacked in their head-quarters, a public-house named the Dolphin, by a posse of magistrates and constables, supported by a detachment of soldiers. The preliminary summons to surrender being treated with contemptuous indifference, a brisk firing commenced from both sides. The Cutters, barricading the lower part of the house, fired out of the windows, till the door was forced; they then retreated over the adjoining house-tops, firing as they went. By this bold defence, they succeeded in escaping to a man; but one soldier was shot dead on the spot, and others were severely wounded. In consequence of this affray, the parish church was converted into a temporary barracks, and occupied by a strong body of troops, who succeeded at last in putting down the pugnacious Cutters.

The bill for building Blackfriars' Bridge was passed in 1756—of course not without great opposition from 'vested interests'—and one of the arguments adduced in favour of the project was, that between Fleet Street and the Thames on one side, and Holborn on the other, there were nothing but ruins, filth, alleys, and dunghills—the lurking-places of the most desperate and flagitious characters. Even the best parts of London were frequented by footpads; and gentlemen, when out at night, in preference to riding in a carriage or chair, walked, with their drawn swords in their hands, so as to be better prepared to repel an attack; for then almost every male adult wore a sword—a custom which, allowing no time for passion to subside or reason to reflect, led to frequent and fatal encounters. Every tavern, gaming-house, and disreputable haunt was the scene of sanguinary contests between wine-maddened duellists. So common and so little thought of were these occurrences, that we seldom meet with notices of them in the newspapers of the time, except in connection with some other circumstance; as for instance: 'The cook at the Shakspeare, who was run through the body in endeavouring to prevent two gentlemen from fighting a duel, is in a fair way of recovery.'

A few years previous to the time of which we write, the king, in his speech to parliament, said: 'It is with the utmost regret I observe that the horrid crimes of robbery and murder are, of late, rather increased than decreased.' As a remedy for this state of affairs, a reward of L.40 was given to every one who arrested a thief, and prosecuted him to conviction and the inevitable gallows. The suburban districts also formed societies, and gave L.100 more, if the offence took place five miles distant from the city. Moreover, every one who captured a highwayman was entitled to the culprit's horse, whatever might be its value, or whoever might have been its legitimate owner. The highwaymen, being well mounted and well armed, were seldom captured, except in their hours of recreation. But these rewards gave rise to a regular business of 'thief-making' and 'thief-taking.' Gangs of villains, conspiring together, trepanned simple youths into seeming robberies; and succeeded in hanging numbers of lads, for the purpose of pocketing the price of their guiltless blood. As may be supposed, those ancient English institutions, the gallows, pillory, and whipping-post, flourished exceedingly one hundred years ago.

In Maitland's *History of London*, published in 1756, there is an engraving of Newgate, as it then appeared, and on the top of the building we see a large machine resembling the sails of a wind-mill. This was a ventilator, to dissipate the vitiated air of the prison, which it did, to the great annoyance of the neighbourhood. The cause of this machine being erected was, simply, that in the spring of 1750, the jail-distemper, a kind of typhus now unknown, caused by crowding and insufficient air, found its way from the jail to the sessions-house, and killed two judges, one lord-mayor, several aldermen, jurymen, and others, to the number, in all, of sixty persons. The building of this ventilator, though a step in the right direction, was, like many other of our reformatory movements, a vain attempt to remedy an effect without doing away with the cause—an ineffectual endeavour to cure an evil, without the slightest reference to its prevention; for we read in the same work that, even with the ventilator, 'the prisoners are packed so close together, and the air so corrupted by their stench, that it occasions a disease, called the jail-distemper, of which they die by dozens; and cart-loads of them are carried out and thrown into a pit in the church-yard of Christ's Church, without ceremony. And to this wretched place many innocent people are sometimes sent, and loaded with irons before their trial, not to secure them, but to extort money from them by a merciless jailer; for if they have money to bribe him, they may have their irons as light as they please.'

The most revolting spectacle of the present day is, without doubt, an execution; yet, happily, this opprobrium of our age and common Christianity is now, comparatively speaking, a rare occurrence; and, hideously appalling though it be, is unattended by the riot, licence, and debauchery—not confined to one spot, but extending over a distance of three miles—that characterised the London executions of one hundred years ago. Hogarth, as the closing scene in the life of 'the idle apprentice,' has exhibited to us the awful procession from Newgate to Tyburn. As the engraving is known to almost every one, we need not further allude to it. But from a newspaper writer of the period, though the quotation be long, and its composition awkward, we feel bound to extract the following description of Newgate on the morning of, and the subsequent journey to Tyburn, to more forcibly illustrate an execution, the superior arrangements, the more decent conduct—in short, the advancement in civilisation of our own era.

'The horrid aspect of turnkeys and jailers, in discontent and hurry; the sharp and dreadful looks of rogues that beg in irons, but who would wish to rob you if they could; the bellowing of half-a-dozen names at a time to inquire after one another; the variety of strong voices howling in one place, scolding, quarrelling, and swearing in another, loud bursts of laughter in a third; the substantial breakfasts that are made in these scenes of horror; the seas of beer and gin that are swallowed, the incessant outcries for more, and the bawling answers made by the tapsters; the impudent and unseasonable jests; the general nastiness, with the oaths and imprecations echoed from every quarter of the prison, added to the melancholy clank of chains and fetters, compose altogether one of the most horrid spectacles the eyes of thinking men can behold. Yet how much more terrific is this dreadful scene rendered by the behaviour of the men just setting off for execution, who are madly drinking or uttering the vilest ribaldry, and jeering others that are less impenitent; while the ordinary bustles among them, and shifting from one to another, distributes scraps of good counsel to inattentive hearers; and near him, the hangman, impatient to be gone, swears at their delays.

'At last they set out, and with them a torrent of mob, consisting of the idlest of holiday-makers, and all the thieves of both sexes, who meet with that security which large mobs afford, so that this occasion becomes a jubilee-day for all offenders, who dare not appear on any other, the confusion making a free mart, an amnesty for all outlaws. To add to the rudeness of the scene, two or three sweeps generally mount the horses that draw the convicts, whose sooty aspects and ludicrous gestures divert the crowd; and the cavalcade, instead of impressing those salutary impressions on the minds of spectators which it is alone intended for, becomes an impious spectacle of laughter, riot, and disorder. The way from Newgate to Tyburn is now one continued fair of the meanest of the rabble. Where the crowd is thinnest, dead cats and dogs fly about, and are deemed excellent pastime. The nearer they approach the gallows, blows are struck, heads are broken, and swinging pieces of stick are thrown about. Amidst this rioting, the sound of different noises, and a variety of outcries on every side, making up a discord not to be paralleled, the last psalm is sung; and the ordinary and executioner, having performed their duties with little ceremony and less concern, seem tired and glad that it is over. The tragedy being ended, a fresh fray arises between the mob and the surgeons about the property of the dead bodies; and the morning's *amusement* ends with often the loss of more lives than die by the halter.'

In a pamphlet of a much later date, the writer, condemning this horrible system, states that although the unhappy convicts were almost invariably intoxicated when they left Newgate, they were 'suffered to stop twice or thrice, on the way to Tyburn, to receive fresh comfort from strong waters.' He further tells us that, after the execution, the hangman stripped the dead bodies, the clothes being his disgusting perquisite. Then the fight commenced among the mob, one party endeavouring to secure the bodies to sell them for dissection, the other to carry them off to their friends for interment. 'Some wretches,' he continues, 'are so miserable as to have no mob either for or against them, and their bodies (it is horrible, but true) lie, to the dishonour of the laws and the disgrace of human nature, absolutely naked under the gallows, till some charitable Christian pays, or till the inhabitants, to be rid of the stench, cause a hole to be dug for interment, without any intervention of authority in either case.'

Referring to newspapers published in the time of the grandfathers of many now living, we read that, on the first Monday in 1756, a deserter from the Foot Guards, a young man of respectable family, was brought out of the Savoy prison in the Strand. Accompanied by his brother and two clergymen, escorted by 400 soldiers, with drums beating the Dead March, and followed by an immense crowd, the unhappy deserter was led through the streets to Hyde Park, and there shot and buried. The government improved this occasion in a curious manner. The Sunday evening previous, warrants for pressing landsmen were secretly issued, and thus the 400 soldiers that guarded the miserable man to execution, formed a very efficient press-gang among the crowd that came to witness it. A few days afterwards, 'a vagabond fellow' was, by order of a magistrate, flogged at the public whipping-post in Covent Garden market for a petty theft.

Early in the year, a hot press took place at Edinburgh, Leith, Newhaven, and Musselburgh: the constables of Edinburgh netted sixty captives on the first day. The next Sunday, a press-gang made its appearance on the High Street, 'just after sermons.' The friends of a journeyman baker, who was among the captured, boldly attempted a rescue. In the fray that ensued, the gang were worsted, and, to save their lives from the infuriated populace, were glad to accept the protection of the town-guard. It then turned out that the gang had no warrant for their proceedings, but were merely a number of ruffians pressing, as our American friends would term it, on their own hook. For every man they took to the rendezvous at Leith, they received a consideration, and no questions were asked. As loyal and patriotic subjects, endeavouring to augment his majesty's forces by sea and land, these ruffians considered they were entitled to all praise. But the lord provost, taking another view of the matter, had the pseudo press-gang flogged through the city, the magistrates, officers of the train-bands, constables, and firemen, honouring the ceremony by their official presence.

About the same time, Mr Blair, the minister of Ruthven in Badenoch, after preaching a sermon on 'the audacious intention of a French invasion,' offered from the pulpit a guinea to every man who would join Lord John Murray's Highland regiment. Whether there were many or few applicants for the worthy clergyman's guineas, we do not know, but we read in the papers of the day of recruits to the number of thirty at a time being sent off, handcuffed, and under a strong guard, to join the same regiment. While the recruiting system of the present time implies a voluntary contract, it was very different one hundred years ago; for instance, we learn that when the constables and servants of Sir Lewis Mackenzie were employed recruiting on his estate in Ross-shire, one stubborn Celt, named Kenneth Huppy, fled to the hills; and even after a long chase, when overtaken by Sir Lewis's gardener, Huppy, still declining to be recruited, stabbed his pursuer to the heart.

As a somewhat parallel circumstance to the announcement in the kirk of Ruthven, we may mention that, in the same year, a notice was read during divine service in the parish church of St George's, Middlesex, to inform the congregation that the church-wardens intended to fit out a privateer, and subscriptions for the patriotic purpose would be received in the vestry. We need scarcely observe, that the war just concluded was the first ever carried on by this country without having recourse to impressment and privateering. Whether the former was judiciously abstained from because the people really would not have submitted to it—the latter, because the enemy had but few merchant-ships to capture, it were needless to inquire. At anyrate, British subjects were not, as before, inhumanly dragged away into the worst kind of slavery; nor our merchants degraded by being connected with a legalised piracy. The London newspapers of the period seem to delight in relating the doughty doings of the press-gang. We read that on one occasion the gang received information that a sailor, their legitimate prey, was protected in a house in Spitalfields. Here was an opportunity of distinction, and of lowering the pride and prestige of the Spitalfields men, who had vowed that no man should ever be pressed in their locality. The house being known, a powerful gang, making a sudden foray, dashed into the dangerous district, captured their man, and carried him away, ere the surprised Spitalfieldians could muster in sufficient force to cut off the hasty retreat. As it was, the capture was not made without bloodshed; the gang left behind them two Spitalfieldsmen lying dead on the street.

Sedan-chairs were then in vogue, and the principal chair-stand was in St James's Street. The brawny chairmen at this stand were long objects of desire to the gang, and at last a grand razzia was made upon them. The chairmen fought like heroes, repulsed the gang, and drove them down the street to the very gate of St James's Palace. There the tide of war ebbed: the palace-guard was called out, and thus reinforced, the gang returned to the fray. Lives were taken, and fearful wounds inflicted on both sides; yet, after all, only three badly wounded chairmen were captured, and carried off to serve his most gracious majesty.

Besides its legitimate duty of providing seamen and soldiers for the service of the state, the press-gang was by no means unfrequently employed to suit private purposes. By its friendly aid, a rival in love or business, an adverse witness, or importunate creditor, any individual, in fact, whose presence was obnoxious or undesirable, could readily be put out of the way, if not for ever, as was most probable, at all events for a considerable period. Even wives managed to get rid of their husbands by this summary process of divorce; and, in the very year we refer to, a daughter procured the impressment of her father, to the end that she might uncontrolledly dissipate his hard-earned savings in vicious indulgences. To be sure, where men were concerned, the chances were equal: Nokes could bribe the gang to waylay and press Stiles, just as Stiles might perform the same good turn for Nokes; but as women were not liable to impressment, it may be imagined that the advantage lay on their side. No such thing, however; though women could not be pressed, still they could be got rid of in another manner—consigned to a more dreadful fate. The private madhouses of the period were a thousand times worse than the holds of the press-tenders, worse even than the floating Pandemoniums ships-of-war then were. The evidence given before the parliamentary committee that inquired into the state of private madhouses in 1762, is a heart-sickening disclosure of human wickedness and helpless misery; and the committee, in their report, state that 'the avarice of the keepers, who were under no other control than their own consciences, led them to assist in the most nefarious plans for confining sane persons, whose relations or guardians, impelled by the same motive or private vengeance, sometimes forgot all the restraints of nature, and immured them in the horrors of a prison, under a charge of insanity.'

Four of the 'thief-makers' already alluded to were tried and convicted, at the Old Bailey sessions, in March 1756, for conspiring to prosecute an innocent lad to death, on a false charge of robbery, so that they might obtain the reward, or blood-money, as it was then termed, amounting to L.140. Part of their sentence was to stand in the pillory, and, accordingly, two of them were pilloried in Holborn. A newspaper informs us that 'such a multitude of people were never known to be collected on a like occasion. A woman was terribly gored by a bullock, and almost trod to death by the mob; a painter's man was pushed out of a cart, had his skull fractured, and was taken up insensible; several people were run over and hurt, and much mischief done. Two pickpockets, being detected at the end of Fetter Lane, were so severely disciplined by the populace, that they were scarcely able to crawl away.' The two wretches in the pillory were pelted with stones, brickbats, and oyster-shells; and when released at the expiration of an hour—the period of their sentence—they were found to be speechless and insensible, but subsequently recovered. Three days after, the other two were pilloried in Smithfield. So briskly were they pelted, that when half an hour had elapsed, the mob, perceiving that one of the two was dead, forbore to throw any more at them. Neither was released, however, until the hour had expired, when the survivor was found to be fearfully mangled, but still breathing.

Such continual scenes of violence were not without their natural fruits—all grades in society were demoralised, and an utter recklessness prevailed with regard to human life. Three captains in the army, who were recruiting at Gravesend, wished to visit the theatre at Greenwich; for this purpose, they hired two post-chaises, and set off on their journey. The officers, afraid of being too late for the performance, kept urging the postboys to drive faster than the horses really could go. On this account, an altercation ensued, and one of the captains, drawing his sword, ran a postboy through the body, and even cut and hacked at the dying man as he lay helplessly bleeding on the ground. The other postboy would have shared the same fate, had not a labourer, who happened to be repairing a hedge by the roadside, rushed forward, and with his hedge-bill held the captains at bay. At this juncture, a sturdy butcher came up, and the officers were disarmed, and made prisoners. A coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the three. They were committed to Maidstone jail, and in due time tried; two were acquitted; the third, who had stabbed the postboy, was condemned and executed.

Another instance of reckless disregard of human life, to say nothing of the destruction of valuable property, occurred about the same time. The good ship *Virginia Merchant* arrived at Bristol with a valuable cargo, consisting of 400 hogsheads of tobacco, and other colonial produce. The tender sent a boat to press, but the homeward-bound crew resisting, compelled the gang to sheer off. The tender then opened fire with her great guns on the unfortunate *Virginia Merchant*, and in a short time, not only killed several of her crew, but sank her, tobacco and all, to the bottom of the Severn. Probably it is of the same tender we read the following sadly suggestive paragraph: 'The mother of one of the two young gentlewomen who were forcibly taken on board the tender at Bristol, and kept there two days, has since went deranged.'

At a period when man had so little mercy for his fellow, we cannot suppose he had any for the brute creation; and we accordingly find bear and bull baiting, with cock-fighting, to have been the favourite amusements of all classes. Yet there were still more gross and inexcusable cruelties committed on the lower animals, without the excitement of contest or gambling, merely to afford a fiendish pleasure to the perpetrators. Who can look upon Hogarth's *Six Stages of Cruelty*, without shuddering? yet such were then the common spectacles of the public streets. Hogarth, as amiable in feeling as admirable in art, says that 'these prints were engraved with the hope of in some degree correcting that barbarous treatment of animals, the very sight of which renders the streets of our metropolis so distressing to every feeling mind.' And he subsequently added: 'If they have had this effect, and checked the progress of cruelty, I am more proud of having been the author, than I should be of having painted Raphael's cartoons.'

The class we now term the people was not in existence in those days, but there was, as Sir John Fielding tells us, 'the rabble, very insolent and abusive, and that sometimes without the least appearance of a cause.' The astute magistrate adds, for the benefit of strangers: 'When this happens, it is always prudent to retire, and give them their way.'

It would be a waste of time to pursue the subject further. Our improvement has been great—much greater, probably, than the imagination can readily realise. There has been no retrogression; the march has ever been onward. Looking out, as we write, into the clear wintry twilight, over a wide reach of the Thames, as it sweeps past the lofty elms and old ivy-covered houses of a river-side Mall, we can see the tide swiftly ebbing downwards in the centre of the stream; while a counter-eddy, on each side of the river, slowly flows in a contrary direction, till it is absorbed and carried away by the main central current. So it is in the great stream of human progress—the very speed and impetus of its central current causes lateral eddies, seemingly flowing backwards, but in reality forming an integral part of one great onward movement.

Closing, then, the dreary records of the past, let us cheerfully and confidently look forward to the future; and, remembering the poet's injunction with regard to the treatment of a guest, let us also

Welcome the coming, speed the parting *year*.

A CUNNING HAND AMONG THE BRANCHES.

Did you ever notice that sometimes two branches of a tree produce a perfect bifurcation; that is, that they separate from a common point? If you examine closely, you will find that such branches took their departure from one and the same bud. In rarer instances, you may see five or six branches all starting from a common centre, and with a regularity that surprises when contrasted with the arrangement of the rest of the tree.

These effects are now and then produced by gemming or inoculating, and not seldom by the unassisted handiwork of nature. When the latter is the case, the bifurcation is caused by the bite of a caterpillar or some other voracious insect. An insect has but to gnaw the point of a bud to make it grow double, triple, quadruple, and so forth, to transform itself indeed into numerous buds, thereafter distinct and separate, each passing singly through all the phases of its vegetation.

What is here said applies to buds that produce wood; it is equally true of those that produce fruit. The insect plies its mandibles, and quite unconsciously starts a new order of developments. After all, however, a little reflection would lead us to believe that buds might be as fecund as seeds. If one grain of wheat produces many grains, why not one bud many buds, if we can only get it into the right condition? What this condition is, we learn from the insect.

At all events, it has been learned by M. Millot-Brulé of Réthel (Ardennes), and turned to good account, for he produces effects at pleasure without waiting for the accident of an insect: with the point of a penknife, or a slip of sand-paper, he makes buds produce as many branches as he chooses. The notion occurred to him in 1849; and he at once made experiments which were successful; and repeating these year by year, he has now produced a new and singularly interesting process of arboriculture. A commission appointed by the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works to examine into it, reported in the following terms of what they had seen in M. Millot-Brulé's gardens:—'Several peach-stems present a multitude of branches proceeding from the same centre with mathematical regularity and symmetry. By skilful disbudding by incisions, and nipping of the buds or shoots, he arranges the trees in a way at once the most picturesque and fantastic. Under his fingers, the obedient branches assume the most varied and elegant forms: he increases the fructification, and develops the formation of buds according to his wish.'

Thoroughly to illustrate the results, diagrams would be necessary; we shall, however, endeavour to explain as clearly as the subject will admit of. M. Millot-Brulé's elementary figure consists of a straight branch which from one common centre separates into fifteen branches, resembling, in fact, a small tree with a regularly formed head. A second represents an espalier peach-tree, the branches of which radiate in the form of a wheel, each branch terminating in an oval ring of smaller branches, developed at regular intervals. From these simple forms, others of a more complex nature may be produced: a single stem, properly managed, will form a square, a parallelogram, or a series of circles, so elegant in design, that if copied in papier mâché they would be prized as graceful ornaments for the drawing-room. The buds may be multiplied and the branches sent off entirely at the pleasure of the cultivator; hence there is no limit to the forms which may be produced.

In the course of his experiments, M. Millot-Brulé discovered another of the interesting secrets of arboriculture—namely, that little branches must not be developed immediately opposite each other on a horizontal branch trained against a wall or on stakes; and the reason is, that the branches which run upwards take up all the sap at the expense of those running downwards; the latter consequently languish. It therefore becomes absolutely necessary to develop the small branches alternately—each lower one between two upper ones—on all horizontal branches. It is possible, moreover, to assist the lower branches by bending the upper ones upon themselves, making them form a sort of knot, but always with the precaution of leaving the extreme points in an upward direction.

Any intelligent person may, by a little dexterity, become a practised arboriculturist. The process in its simplest form appears to be to decapitate the buds with a penknife as soon as the sap begins to circulate in the spring. In a few days, two new buds appear at the base of the bud thus operated on, and the vegetation of these is easily equalised by expert trimming, or pinching off when necessary. The equilibrium once established, these two buds may be similarly treated, and as each will produce two more, any number of branches may be obtained, and a thick full head developed on the top of a single stem. To make branches shoot in different directions, the terminal bud of the main branch is pinched at one side or the other, according as the direction required is to the right or left; and the new buds being pinched in turn, perfect control is established over each branch from its very earliest growth. We pretend not to enter into the minute details that would be requisite in a horticultural publication; all we purpose is to convey some general notion of what strikes us as a remarkable discovery.

Wires are used when necessary to maintain the branches in a proper position; and from this point we are led to a consideration of practical use and value. This method of multiplying branches being introduced into nurseries, the trees grown will be more fruitful and less irregular in form than heretofore. Who would not rather see a shapely tree than a straggler! It will enable landscape-gardeners to make single trees or groups as ornamental as they please. Parks may thus become more beautiful than ever, and public walks, boulevards, and the like, may be decorated according to taste or fancy. There are many persons who will perhaps say that trees are most beautiful when left entirely to nature; but they forget that nature sometimes produces vegetable as well as animal deformities, and that it must therefore be an advantage to be able to encourage gracefulness.

But M. Millot-Brulé's method admits of an immediate and eminently useful application—namely, that of controlling the form of branches in plantations grown for their timber. In agricultural implements, in ship-building, fancy cabinet-making and carpentry, as well as in other employments that will suggest themselves to the mind, angular, forked, and bent timber is an article of prime necessity. What an advantage is gained to the grower when, using his judgment, aided by a penknife and a slip of sand-paper, he can make the trees under his care obedient to his will! Moreover, it appears to us that in this process we have a new field open for the exercise of ingenuity, out of which may follow new employments for industry; and we commend the subject to all who are engaged in the culture of trees.

For the substance of the foregoing, we are indebted to a scientific periodical published in Paris.

THE BIRD IN THE STORM.

THE rain was falling, the winds were calling,
The clouds swept over the sky,
When 'mid the alarm of darkness and storm,
A shower of song swept by—
Says the little wee bird: ''Tis I.'

'Ah! is it not dreary, and are you not weary,
Poor little wee bird?' I said.
'How lonely and queer you must feel out here,
Just under the tempest dread—
Ah! birdie, you'll soon be dead!'

'While the storm is ringing, is my time for singing,'
Says the little wee bird to me;
'Though the clouds be dim, yet I warble my hymn;
And I die not, though cold it be;
For my name it is Hope,' says she.

So the song it is gushing, and seems as if hushing,
The atmosphere tempest-stirred;
Softly and clear it falls on the ear,
Through clouds and through darkness heard—
The song of the sweet wee bird! E.

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COMMON-PLACE PEOPLE.

THE very good and the very bad among mankind, albeit they form the ordinary humanity of most novels, are rare in actual life. If we descend from the heights of rose-coloured romance to the sober gray valley of this work-a-day world, we shall find that there is generally some saving-clause of good in the wicked, some fault or failing in the virtuous, to redeem the one from absolute atrocity, and the other from complete perfection. There is happily a medium between all extremes, and human beings are not half of them guileless lambs, and the other half exultant wolves ready to pounce upon them, as romancists would have us believe. Moreover, even the modified heroes and villains of real life form but a very small portion of the world's *dramatis personæ*. The vast body of mankind consist of those who are neither detestably bad nor admirably good; overwhelmingly clever, or pitiably stupid—of the *commonplace*, in a word. It is they who leaven society, as it were, and render it of a due consistency; it is they who act as the chorus to the drama, the background to the picture, and who, though not heroic themselves, are necessary adjuncts to the heroism of others.

It is wisely ordered thus, and the more so that all these supernumeraries in the great drama of life have little dramatic episodes of their own, whereof they individually are the heroes and heroines. No one is insignificant to himself; and the most common-place being in the world would assuredly be the last person to suspect the small degree of his own value in the social scale. On the contrary, your ordinary sort of man generally believes himself to be a Napoleon, a Shakspeare, or a Newton, according as his tastes and pursuits are military, literary, or scientific. Often, too, the world is partially deluded into the same belief; for it is a credulous world in some respects, and when it sees a man holding implicit faith in himself, it is very apt to appraise him by his own standard. It is astonishing to think of the number of people who are held to be wonderfully clever, not to say geniuses, simply on the strength of their personal conviction that they are so. They have never done anything to prove it—never will, probably; but they have the benefit of the *prestige* now, and will carry it with them even to the grave. Did any one ever know a doctor who was *not* termed 'a remarkably skilful man?'—or a lawyer, who was not accounted a shrewd, talented fellow?—or a clergyman, who was not pronounced to be either most eloquent or most excellent by a sufficient number of individuals to constitute a Public? In fact, if we might believe in all the opinions we hear, talent is the rule, and want of it the exception, in this present age. Men and women of intellect are the commonplace; the only moderately intelligent and the stupid are the few—the *raræ aves*.

But we—you and I, reader—don't believe all we hear, and we know better of what calibre of humanity the various classes of the commonplace are actually composed. We know, too, how often 'the world'—principally made up of those very classes, we remember—is mistaken in its judgments, as to who are, and who are not, common-place people. We have marked numerous instances when it has done honour to the daw in peacock's feathers, and when—to carry out the ornithological comparison—it has neglected or despised the nightingale, because it was so brown and homely a bird to look at. Was it not only the other evening, at Lady Ormolu's dinner-party, that Mr Jones, after conversing through one course and a half with his left-hand neighbour, pronounced him, in an aside to the lady on his right, one of the dullest, most inane, and most common-place individuals? And was not the said Jones put to the blush when he was informed that his dull and inane acquaintance was the world-renowned artist, whose pictures are known, admired, and prized by all Europe? Be more cautious another time, Mr Jones, in forming your opinion of strangers, and, for your reputation's sake, be less precipitate in expressing it when formed. Do not again judge a man's intellect after half an hour's conversation with him, particularly at a dinner-party. Perhaps it requires not a large intellect, but a little one, to constitute the stock in trade of the sayer of smart things and agreeable nothings, who is so valuable an adjunct to assemblies, and who is pronounced 'a most clever, pleasant person' by Mr Jones and others.

'Appearances are deceitful,' say the school-copies. It is to be feared that the round-text moralities of the writing-master make but a small impression on the minds of youth, or that it soon wears off; for when boys grow to man's estate, they are apt to run exactly counter to the excellent advice contained in those pithy little sentences. How many people of our acquaintance do *not* judge from appearances? Let a man quote from one or two abstruse books, interlard his conversation with Latin and Greek, comb his hair but seldom, and shave still less frequently, and he will find a sufficient number of persons quite ready to admire him as the wisest, most erudite of men. In the same way, a man who dresses well, speaks with respectful regard for Lindley Murray, and does not outrage the *bienséances*, is considered and denominated a *gentleman*. Well, perhaps after all, it is a wise world to be so credulous! If the outside is fair, let us be content with *that*, without seeking to look deeper. Let us believe in the talent of one person, the amiability of another, just as we do in the solidity of our rosewood tables. Let us banish the consciousness that they are only veneered, and that if we cut into the wood, we shall find that the polish does not extend beyond the surface. At anyrate, I, who am an unappreciated, and therefore a cynical being, have resolved to do so for the future.

But *revenons à nos moutons*—that is to say, to our common-place people. As I have indicated, I hope, by the foregoing anecdote of Jones, the balance is kept tolerably even. If one set of people are over-rated, the really talented, the unquestionably superior, are often treated very shabbily by that great autocrat, public opinion. I myself am thought little of by ordinary minds. As I have said, the world is principally made up of common-place people, and it naturally seeks its heroes from among its peers. *Parmi les aveugles les borgnes sont rois.* People with two eyes have no chance.

However, I will add—for I like to be impartial—that my wife, who is of a more genial temperament than I am, takes altogether another view of the subject. She thinks—I put it into elegant language for her, as she is not literary—that commonplaceism *per se* does not exist. Everybody is interesting to some one or two others in the world; for instance, every man who has a mother has some one to admire and love him—to think him a hero or a sage—most handsome, most clever, or most excellent in some way. He is never commonplace to *her*. Moreover, my wife declares her belief, confirmed by observation, that if we could thoroughly understand the idiosyncrasy, or be made intimately acquainted with the *lives* of even those people we ourselves are apt to decry as commonplace, we should be sure to find special individualities, both of thought, and feeling, and action, to redeem them from the character. Therefore, she triumphantly concludes, since the world's common-place people are *my* heroes, and my common-place people are very often God's heroes and heroines—where are we to find the absolutely commonplace?

I am to remember, she says, my old-bachelor cousin Harte, whom I always used to wonder at, as the most perfect specimen of human clock-work, wound up to go to the bank daily, write there for six hours, and return to his lodgings—and who couldn't do anything else, I verily believed, except potter about the back garden of his lodgings, read the newspaper, and cut out a man with a cocked-hat, in card-board, to amuse the children, when he came to us to tea. Well, how was I to know that all that time he might have been put into a book as an example of constancy, courage, and all that sort of thing? I hardly knew that such a person as Anna Lyle existed, much less that they had loved each other ever since they were boy and girl together. But they were both poor, and Anna had a helpless father dependent on her for support; so they both worked on, loved one another, and had patience. They were middle-aged before they married. Yes, I remember I *was* astonished when Harte quietly introduced his wife to us, and for the first time I noticed something in his face. In fact, I've not thought him at all commonplace since.

I confess, also, that I never thought much about little Charlotte Selby—one of Selby the merchant's three daughters. Her elder sister was the more accomplished, and the younger was far handsomer. She appeared to me a very ordinary kind of medium, in age, looks, and abilities. I never should have suspected her of the quiet energy, the sense and courage she displayed when her father failed, and the family were reduced to much poverty and privation. She was the mainstay and support of all the rest through the whole trying time that the broken-down merchant was struggling with his difficulties. The clever sister made money by her pen; the handsome one, who had married brilliantly, helped the fallen family, as she should; but I admit at once that I admire and respect little Charlotte far beyond either the authoress or the beauty, though they are both good women in their way.

Further, I am reminded—— But my wife's examples would be endless. I shall name no more. I submit to her so far as to own, that there may be plenty more Hartes and Charlottes among my common-place acquaintance, even among those that I grumble at when they are invited to tea, and call 'limpets' and 'pumpany.' Yes, yes, anything and everything she says is true, no doubt.

I deny nothing—and I shall not go over my own case again. Judge between us, O reader, and decide for thyself upon this knotty question.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

In the dashing times which produced the Declaration of Independence, and opened up the most glowing anticipations of a political millennium, in which we were to 'hold these truths as self-evident, that all men are created equal—that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights—that among these are life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'—we say, in the midst of these announcements of a brighter day for hitherto down-trodden human nature, and of what was actually done towards founding a great republic, who could have foreseen that in eighty years the result would be a state of things in which a sixth part of the population would be slaves—human beings of every variety of complexion and diversity of intelligence, placed, from no fault of their own, on a level with the brute creation; and further, that this sorrowful and abject condition would come to be extended, perpetuated, vindicated as an essential element in civil society! The world, as it appears to us, has hardly awakened to a consciousness of this historical anomaly; and this is not surprising, for the Americans themselves are as yet only beginning to see the awkwardness of the dilemma into which they have allowed themselves to be drifted.

It was from no qualm of conscience on the part of the committee appointed to draw up the Declaration—Jefferson, Adams, Livingston, Sherman, and Franklin—that the passages relative to slavery were struck out from the celebrated document. 'He [the king of Great Britain] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur a miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce.'[*] &c. It was quite as well that these ungentle accusations should have been withdrawn in consideration, as is said, for the feelings of southern members of the infant confederacy; that so there might remain no historical doubt of the fact, that Union was secured only by conciliating the more intractable order of slaveholders. Whatever, therefore, may be our surprise at the present anomalous complication of American liberty and slavery, the marvel would seem to be lessened by the explanation, that from the very commencement, on that memorable 4th of July 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was read from the steps of the city-hall in Philadelphia, there never has been a condition of universal freedom. The Declaration, doubtless, propounded the doctrine of human equality; but this document never seems to have had the validity of law. At all events, as regards the principle of slavery, the lofty preamble of the Declaration about 'inalienable rights' has proved to be only a respectable piece of *Bunkum*—words which serve their purpose, and signify nothing.

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[*] The first draught of the Declaration of Independence, embracing these erased passages, is shewn in the rooms of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, an institution founded by Franklin. It was the greatest archæological curiosity (if such a term be allowable) which the present writer saw in the United States.

At the opening of the revolutionary war, there were slaves in all the revolted colonies; even in Massachusetts, the land of the 'Pilgrim Fathers,' there were slaves, and sales of slaves too. England, of course, must be charged with the crime of having, in the first instance, introduced these unfortunate Africans as an article of merchandise into the plantations against the repeatedly expressed wishes of the settlers, and of having fostered slavery till it took root as a social usage. Lawyers might now speculate on the question —whether, at the period of the revolutionary troubles, slaves could be legally held in the colonies? A short time previously, it had been decided by courts of justice, that a slave landing in England became free; and as the common law was extended over all parts of the realm, it is demonstrable that the maintenance of slavery in distant dependencies was, to say the least of it, open to challenge. The question was not, however, tried; and, as is well known, a vigorous English slave-trade was carried on for many years afterwards with the West Indies and other possessions—much to the profit of Liverpool and Bristol, and apparently to the satisfaction or indifference of all, except the few individuals who deigned to feel an interest in the unhappy objects of ruthless deportation—which individuals, as is usual in such cases, were set down as visionaries, crack-brained enthusiasts, who had no proper regard for national greatness. When the House of Commons was at length induced, in 1792, to pass a bill for the suppression of the slave-trade, it was rejected by the House of Lords, on the ground of its damaging effects upon great commercial and colonial interests. As the famous abolition act did not pass till 1807, and the trade did not absolutely cease till the 1st of January 1808—as, in fact, slaves were held in the colonies until our own times—and, what is still more to the point, as our continued national prosperity depends in no small degree on the purchase and manufacture of slave-grown cotton—the English have not much reason to be boastful on the subject.

For several years after the termination of the revolutionary war—1784 to 1789—the Americans had no proper federal constitution, and public matters were regulated during this interregnum by what was called the Continental Congress, sitting in Philadelphia or New York. To have anything like a correct notion of the American slave question, we need to look back to the operations of this august body. One of the subjects that fell under its discussion, was the management of certain western territories which several states relinquished for the benefit of the general commonwealth, in consideration that congress should liquidate debts and obligations incurred by these states during the war. The cessions were made on these terms; and congress henceforth exercised a direct sovereignty over large tracts of country, from which new states could be excavated. Plans for the government of the Western Territory occupied considerable attention; Mr Jefferson apparently taking a lead in the business, and producing schemes by which slavery was never to be intruded into this vast region. A proposal of this nature was lost on coming to a vote; but at length, in 1787, in the last continental congress, was passed an 'Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-west of the Ohio,' which embraced this provision: 'There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall be duly convicted.' The enactment of this law may be said to settle the point, that congress is entitled, among other regulations, to enjoin that slavery shall or shall not be a constituent element in the Territories under its special jurisdiction.

The circumstance of Jefferson not being able to carry his larger measure, which comprehended territories south of those just mentioned, shews that the leading men of the time were cramped in their benevolent efforts to extend the sphere of freedom. They were thoroughly aware that slavery in any form, or wherever situated, was a bad thing; and on suitable occasions, they spoke plainly out on the subject. Not disguising the fact from themselves or from others, they nevertheless thought proper to temporise. Believing that any attempt at emancipation through federal agency would probably alienate slaveholders, and so jeopardise the consolidation of the States, they were inclined to leave the subject to the action of public opinion, of which there were hopeful symptoms. As early as 1775, the representatives of a district in Georgia passed a resolution, declaring their disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of slavery in America—'a practice,' they say, 'founded on injustice and cruelty, and highly dangerous to our liberties, as well as lives; debasing part of our fellow-creatures below men, and corrupting the virtue and morals of the rest; and as laying the basis of that liberty we contend for on a wrong foundation.' Other anti-slavery sentiments shine out during the ensuing ten years. Massachusetts and other New-England States, and also Pennsylvania, denounce slavery, provide for securing freedom to all born after a certain day, and prohibit the import of any more slaves. Virginia likewise prohibits importation, and removes legal restrictions on emancipation. From North Carolina, New York, and New Jersey, are issued edicts against the further import of slaves. In short, it appears as if slavery was everywhere about to be given up, and done with. Some expectations of this kind, along with an anxiety to conciliate doubtful friends, afford the only excuse for the perpetuation of slavery under the constitution. With a distinct consciousness of its injustice, its dangers, slavery was recognised under ambiguous terms—singular anomaly!—in the great charter of republican freedom. It was competent to repudiate it; it was advisable to maintain a discreet silence respecting it. Neither was done. Here lies the first great blunder of American statesmanship, never to be rectified. The constitution was framed in 1787, and was in general operation in 1789.

This constitution, which still gives cohesion to the States under a federal government, is an instrument divided into articles, each subdivided into clauses. The passages referring to slavery are as follows: In the second clause of the first article there is a provision for representation and taxation—'Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.' By 'all other persons' is signified slaves. Accordingly, in whatever state slavery exists, there is till this day a statutory method of making up an artificial constituency: in other words, the number is swelled by counting slaves; but as the slaves have no vote, it happens that a limited constituency of free white persons possess a political power equal to that of a constituency altogether free. That so acute a people as the Americans should have accepted this as a fair thing in representation, and still submit to it, almost passes belief. To proceed, however. The next reference to slavery in the constitution is contained in another clause of the first article—'The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed, not exceeding ten dollars on each person.' By one of the clauses of the fourth article, it is ordained that 'No person held to service or labour in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such labour may be due.' The use of such ambiguous terms as 'persons held to labour,' leads one to infer that the fathers of the constitution were ashamed of the thing indicated. In the face of mankind, and fresh from a successful struggle for liberty, they do not appear to have had the courage to employ a candid phraseology. Be this as it may, the constitution had taken its ground in maintaining the rights of slaveholders. They could hold persons to service, pursue and secure them if they fled; and at least until 1808, they could migrate with them to new possessions, and receive fresh supplies by importation.

Possibly, the national conscience felt no alarm in adopting these legal institutes. All were jubilant over late successes. A mighty power three thousand miles off had been humbled; 'glory,' as Emerson says, had been 'bought cheap.' The new republic could afford to lecture England—which, we are thankful, has always been able to stand a good deal of sound scolding—on the doctrine of inherent human rights. In the address of the first congress under the constitution, to the people of Great Britain, what grandeur in the passages about liberty, oppression, slavery, and chains. 'When a nation, led to greatness by the hand of liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence, and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her friends and children, and instead of giving support to freedom, turns advocate for slavery and oppression, there is reason to believe that she has ceased to be virtuous, or has been extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.' With such remonstrances against wrong-doing, which seem as if addressed to the living generation of Americans, who could suppose that this same congress required to be reminded that a section of the population was still deprived of its rights? As president of the Abolition Society of Philadelphia, Franklin signed a memorial to the first congress, praying that the blessings of liberty may be rightfully administered, 'without distinction of colour,' and that congress would be pleased to countenance the restoration to liberty of those unhappy men, who alone in a land of freedom are degraded into perpetual bondage.' We all admire the philanthropy breathed in these words; but are unpleasantly reminded that Franklin, with his compatriots, would perhaps have acted more wisely in not constitutionally sanctioning a thing which required afterwards to be spoken of in terms of reprobation.

Let us, however, not bear too hard on the first congress, which in 1789 set a worthy example for future legislation. If the constitution had given congress no power to meddle with slavery in any of the states, it had at least enabled it to regulate the affairs of the territories, from which, both by law and precedent, slavery could be peremptorily excluded. This congress accordingly 'recognised and affirmed the doctrine, embodied by Jefferson in the ordinance of 1787, which for ever excluded slavery from the territory that now embraces Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; and in 1800, the same doctrine was approved by John Adams in the Territorial Act for Indiana.'*

Kept as yet within bounds, and no means being immediately adopted to push slavery beyond certain old limits, the number of 'persons held to labour' in the United States, in 1790, was only 697,897; and as their average market-value was then comparatively small, there could have been no insurmountable difficulty in providing means for their liberation on equitable terms. But no effort of this kind required to be made. The progress of local emancipation which was clearing slavery from the northern, would soon remove it from the middle states; and all that the legislators of the day were called on to do, was to adopt such measures as would prevent slavery from extending and intrenching itself permanently in the south. Neglectful on this point, all was lost.

Engaged in the task of establishing a great nation—building cities, reclaiming wildernesses, opening up channels of internal communication, extending commerce, planting churches, schools, printing-presses, and other engines of civilisation; successful in almost all arts, and flourishing beyond the hopes of the wildest imagination—the Americans never seem to have attained a clear consciousness that there was any lurking possibility of social dislocation in consequence of slavery being tolerated within their political system. Not that there has not always been a party who augured danger from this quarter; but in the main, things have been left to take their course; or more correctly, the nation has, with singular indifference, seen a series of events successively and more and more hopelessly interweave slavery with the constitution.

It was, we believe, a crotchet of Washington that the federal capital of the United States should be a city removed from popular influences—as if there was any imaginable Olympus from which the pleasant constitutional practice of *Lobbying* could by any stratagem be excluded. New York would not do. Philadelphia—more the pity—would not do. There must be a metropolis standing alone in virtuous solitude, somewhere about the centre of the Union. Accordingly, a site was pitched upon, on the banks of the Potomac, the contiguous states of Virginia and Maryland severally resigning a patch of a few miles square for the purpose, henceforth called the District of Columbia. When Washington here planned and built the city which bears his name, he could not have had any great horror of slavery, although he would much rather there had been no such thing in the world. Virginia and Maryland were then, as now, slave states. Slavery accordingly remained in the District of Columbia, as if indigenous in the soil; and from this time the supreme authorities of the United States became the civic magistracy of a kind of miniature independent state, in which slavery was a recognised institution. It could be shewn that this plantation of a political metropolis in the bosom of slavery did much disservice to the cause of freedom—the sight of slaves, slave-depôts, slave-sales, and the looseness of morals usual in communities affected by slavery, producing no good effect on representatives from the free states. It might be argued that, as Columbia was surrounded by slave states, freedom within this small domain was impracticable. That, however, is not the question. The thing to be deprecated was, making federal authority responsible for an institution which American writers never cease to represent as belonging exclusively to the states in their individual capacity. If any one up till this time imagined that slavery was independent of national administration, his faith, we think, must have received a considerable shock. There were remonstrances, but they sunk and disappeared under a general acquiescence.

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* *America Free, or America Slave—Address to the Citizens of Westchester.* By John Jay, Esq.

We are now referring to the close of the last and beginning of the present century, and shortly afterwards came an event far more serious than the organisation of the capital of the Union. This was a vast accession of new territory on the south and west. Left to themselves, with a wide continent invitingly open for acquisition, the Anglo-Americans only seemed to fulfil an obvious destiny in carrying their flag beyond the limits of the colonies which had been reft from the British crown. A favourable opportunity for making a large acquisition occurred in 1803, when the French under Bonaparte offered to sell the province of Louisiana, which embraced pretty nearly the whole Valley of the Mississippi. A little better management on the part of England would perhaps have saved the French the trouble of bargaining away this valuable foreign possession, which they could no longer keep; but as Louisiana was not so secured, it fell naturally, and we must say justifiably, into the hands of the Americans. The purchase, which was made for the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, excited the first of that series of struggles in congress between north and south, which has lasted till our own times. The country acquired, was already settled in its lower part with French slaveholders engaged in the culture of sugar and cotton, and covered an area of about 900,000 square miles—a space larger than all the old thirteen states put together, and including the territories of Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, which have latterly engaged so much angry disputation, and caused no little bloodshed.

On the one hand, it was scarcely in human nature to resist the easy acquisition of so splendid a domain; on the other, there were not unreasonable fears among northern politicians that the addition would in some way imperil the security of the Union. Prognostications of disaster, remonstrances, legal doubts, availed not against the controlling desire for national greatness. It mattered not that Washington, in his farewell address to the people of the United States, had uttered the solemn warning—'Let there be no change from usurpation.' It mattered not that Jefferson, at the time president, shewed argumentatively that 'the constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for our incorporating foreign nations into our Union,' and intimated that the acquisition of Louisiana 'would make the constitution blank paper by construction.' Against his better judgment, Jefferson acquiesced in the opinions of those who differed from him, and passed the bill which incorporated Louisiana with the Union. No provision was made for excluding slavery from the ceded territory: the inhabitants, on the contrary, were insured the enjoyment of all their existing property, rights, and privileges; and as the holding of slaves was one of these immunities, it continued, as a matter of course, to be incorporated with the public policy.

The passage of the Louisiana Bill has been justly referred to as the turning-point in the history of the states. It at once and for ever reduced the northern and free communities to an inferior political position, and gave an immense preponderance to the slaveholding interests of the south. In accounting for so extraordinary a change in affairs, the future historian will probably point to other reasons besides the vulgar outcry for national enlargement. He will doubtless find occasion to lament the decline of public spirit. Whether it be that Providence at certain periods sends great men into the world to accomplish particular purposes; or that such at all times latently exist, and are developed into notice by national convulsions; or, to hazard another alternative, that republics are not favourable to the growth of prominent individuals, the fact is undeniable that the great men who effected the American and French revolutions, and who, be it remarked, were bred up under monarchical rule, left behind them no equals in magnitude of intellect or indomitable force of character. It is true that several persons who figured in the commotions of '76 were still on the stage when the Louisiana Bill came under discussion; but there was now a general collapse in heroism; intrigue took the place of patriotic ardour; the men of the north, for the sake of material interests, succumbed to a course of treatment, which their more sturdy ancestors would not have endured from an English ministry. Unfortunately, also, a deterioration of manners was visible among slaveholders. The gentlemanly spirit of the old planters was passing away. Virginia was beginning to be 'overrun by time-servers, office-hunters, and political blacklegs.' Power was subsiding into the possession of this disreputable class of personages. Nor, all things considered, could much else be expected. Certain radical mistakes, as had been seen, were committed in the general terms of union. The constitutional recognition of slavery had fixed and given breadth to the institution. The very slaveholders had secured a franchise to which nothing corresponded in the north. For the free states, as has been shewn, representation is based purely on a free population, whereas in the slave states it is founded to a large extent on property in slaves; consequently, a mere handful of slaveholders—only 350,000, it is said, altogether, along with their indigent and easily influenced white neighbours—are able to exert a direct power in the House of Representatives, approaching that of the wealthy and populous free states, numbering in 1850 a population of 13,330,650 whites. Of course, such a flagrant piece of injustice could not have been tolerated for any length of time, had the north been true to itself. But this, as we may afterwards have occasion to particularise, it has never been—a large proportion of northern men having on all occasions cast in their lot with the political party represented by the more imperious aristocracy of the south. With such facts before us, can we feel surprise at the passage of the Louisiana Bill, and all subsequent bills of the same nature? Freedom had been delivered up, bound hand and foot, to the interests of slavery, and all that followed was a natural consequence of this fundamental error. We are justified in these opinions by the remarks of the venerable Josiah Quincy, a survivor of the youthful era of the republic. In his late admirable address on this subject, he says: 'The passage of the Louisiana Admission Bill was effected by arts which slaveholders well know how to select and apply. Sops were given to the congressional watch-dogs of the free states. To some, promises were made, by way of opiates; and those whom they could neither pay nor drug were publicly treated with insolence and scorn. Threats, duels, and violence were at that day, as now, modes approved by them to deter men from awakening the free states to a sense of danger. From the moment the act was passed, they saw that the free states were shorn of their strength; that they had obtained space to multiply slaves at their will; and Mr Jefferson had confidently told them that, from that moment, the "constitution of the United States was blank paper;" but more correctly, there was no longer any constitution. The slaveholders, from that day, saw they had the free states in their power; that they were masters, and the free states slaves; and have acted accordingly. From the passage of the Louisiana Bill until this day, their policy has been directed to a single object, with almost uninterrupted success. That object was to exclude the free states from any share of power, except in subserviency to their views; and they have undeniably, during all the subsequent period of our history (the administration of John Quincy Adams only excepted) placed in the chair of state either slaveholders or men from the free states who, for the sake of power, consented to be their tools—"Northern men with Southern principles;" in other words, men who, for the sake of power or pay, were willing to do any work they would set them upon.'*

With the widening scope for slave-labour opened up by the passage of the Louisiana Bill, also the contemporary extension of slavery over portions of the southern states, it will not appear strange that in 1810 (notwithstanding the removal of the institution from several states, and the stoppage of the foreign slave-trade in 1808), the number of slaves in the Union had increased to 1,191,364—a significant commentary on the hallucinations of the patriot founders of the republic. W. C.

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* *Address Illustrative of the Nature and Power of the Slave States, and the Duties of the Free States:* delivered at Quincy, Massachusetts, June 5, 1856. Boston: Ticknor and Fields.

THE MUTINY OF THE GRANT HIGHLANDERS.

BY ONE OF THE MUTINEERS.

Before entering on the subject in hand, the reader will be pleased to bear with me while I give a brief relation of the circumstances which brought me in connection with the Grant Highlanders, and of the doings of the regiment previous to the mutiny.

I am one of those unfortunates who never saw their father. Mine died a week before my birth, and my mother married a discharged soldier six months afterwards. Poor woman!—happy would it have been for her, and for me too, had she remained faithful to the memory of her first husband, for the cruelty and debauchery of her second sent her to an early grave, and drove her boy forth a wanderer from the home that should have sheltered him. Thus, while yet a parent's guiding hand should have been with me, I was cast upon the mercies of a strange world, and forced to take an active part in the great battle of life.

After struggling with difficulties such as only the friendless have to encounter, I at length reached that period which was to mark my future destiny. This was in 1794, when I would be about fifteen years of age, tall, strong, and prematurely manly. Sir James Grant was then engaged in raising a new regiment—the 97th, or Grant Highlanders; and many lads from the district in which I lived—a lonesome valley in Inverness-shire—enlisted under his banner. At first I felt no desire to follow their example, for the remembrance of a certain red coat, which at one time lay in a drawer in my mother's kitchen, and which had engendered a dislike to all soldiers, now arose vividly before me. One beautiful spring morning, however, as I was tending cattle on an upland pasture, there came floating on the freshening breeze, which hurried oceanward, sounds of distant music. I was wondering and debating with myself whence they proceeded, when suddenly I beheld a numerous band of red coats emerge from the gorge of a gloomy valley at an angle of the hill whereon I was standing. It was a glorious sight to my young eyes that first beholding of a regiment of soldiers, as rank by rank they issued from the darkness into the sunshine, which fell, as it were, in showers of glory on their scarlet array!

On, on they came, and the merry roll of the drum set my heart dancing. My whole nature seemed to undergo a revolution. Old antipathies were forgotten, and giddy with delight, I hastened down the hill to meet the approaching Highlanders, for it was Sir James Grant's new regiment on the march to Fort George.

In the mood of mind which possessed me, it required no 'oily tongue persuasive' to induce me to become a king's man, nor had I before my eyes the fear of breaking the heart of a poor old mother, or that of a sweetheart, therefore I readily accepted the shilling which Lieutenant Macdonald offered me. Sending my dog, Chance, off to watch the cattle until a more trustworthy servant than I should come, I marched away with a swaggering air from the hills of my boyhood, never more to behold them, except through the dim mists of the far away.

Drill, drill, drill!—months of continuous drill, and then we were pronounced fit for duty. In the summer of 1794, we, together with the Gordon and Seaforth Highlanders, sailed from Fort George for Southampton in England. We had scarcely got settled in our new quarters ere we got the route for the island of Guernsey, where we passed a miserable winter—our duty being onerous, rations scanty, and the weather severe. Glad, indeed, were we when the spring of '95 saw us once more safely located on the shores of Old England.

But there is no rest for the wicked. Government having now more need of our aid on the sea than on the land, bethought themselves of rendering us available as sea-soldiers; and in conformity with this idea, we were lent, as it were, for a short season, to the marine service.

In our new character, we joined the Channel-fleet under Lord Bridport. To us it was a mere pleasure-cruise, until the 21st of June, when a frigate brought us intelligence that the enemy's fleet was out; but, much to the chagrin of Jack, a heavy gale was blowing at the time, which forced us to remain inactive, and to tack about, under easy sail. At midnight, however, the wind somewhat abated, and by the first streaks of morning, we descried the enemy right ahead. Cheer after cheer rent the welkin, as his lordship's signal for a general chase and to prepare for action flew forth to the breeze. On board our wooden bulwarks all were as lifeful and mirthful as if they had been hasting to a bridal-feast—and so they were—but Death, unthought of, was the bridegroom.

The chase continued all that day and night, for the gale had lulled to a dead calm; and as *screws* were then unthought of, our progress was slow. O how we did whistle for a few puffs of our late visitant the gale! At four in the morning of the 23d a fine breeze sprung up to our whistling, and ere two more hours had passed, the French were brought within range of our long Toms. The *Irresistible*, the *Orion*, the *Robert*, and the *Colossus*—on board of which last vessel I was—being the headmost ships-of-the-line, were the first to enter into action.

This was the first fight in which we Highland marines had been engaged. We certainly did feel strangely out of our element, cooped up within wooden walls, unable to dash forward at once to the charge.

It is strange how quickly the mind assimilates itself to the spirit which prevails around. At first, there was a slight tremor of fear mixed with my courage; and the sight of the mangled bodies and limbs of my mates well-nigh sickened me. But the stir and bustle of the battle, the thunder and glare of the cannon, and the shouts of the combatants, mingled with the shrieks of the wounded, soon drove my sentimentalism away, and I cheered, loaded, and fired away, as if it had only been a review, instead of a mighty life-struggle in which I was engaged.

The breeze which carried the *Irresistible* and six others into action having failed before the heavy line-ships could come up, the seven had to begin and maintain the fight with fourteen of the enemy. We were beginning to feel two to one rather a little unpleasant, when the tide of battle was turned by the arrival of the others; and as the admiral passed us in the *Royal George*, we welcomed him with three thundering cheers. The battle now was soon over, and we were left in possession of the *Formidable*, 80; *Le Tigre*, 80; and the *Alexandre*, 74 guns.

About forty of my comrades were among the killed and wounded; but to me Providence was kind—I came out of the fight without having received a scratch. Our ship, besides receiving numerous damages of a minor character, had her main top-mast shot away, and the mizzen greatly shattered. The *Prince of Wales*, the *Robert*, and the *Orion*, being also considerably damaged, were ordered, along with us, into port with the prizes, to get repaired.

On landing at Portsmouth, we were quartered in Hilsea Barracks. We mustered at this time about 1200 men altogether. This number being considered by those in power too many for one battalion, the regiment was divided into two, one of which was sent on board the hulks to guard the prisoners, while the other was left on shore to do barrack-duty. The latter division, to which I belonged, soon after received orders to be drafted for the marine service solely. To a man we refused to go—arguing that, having enlisted for the land service, we were determined not to be *forced* into any other. Hearing of our refusal to comply, General C——, the governor, came among us next day, and threatened *compulsion* unless we succumbed; but we only laughed at his threats, and were the more resolved to hold out for what we conceived to be our rights. Letters were privately conveyed to those on board the hulks, requesting them to join us without delay. They lost no time in doing so: that same night they secured the prisoners by closing the hatches, and before morning, were all safe with us in Hilsea Barracks. Foreseeing how the affair was likely to end, our officers now left us. The governor, of course, was early informed of our proceedings, and a second visit from him was the result. The sergeants, acting in our behalf, told him we were all willing to shed our best blood in defence of king and country, but that no power on earth could *compel* us to become marines, when we willed otherwise. To be bearded thus by a parcel of Scotch vagabonds, as he politely termed us, was more than the old gentleman could bear with equanimity. He left us in high dudgeon, blustering as he went, that before the week was a day older, we would gladly do that which government required us. We guessed what he meant, and prepared accordingly. The party who had been doing duty on board the hulks still retained their ammunition, which was now divided equally among us all.

Next morning at length dawned, and with it came the governor, the 11th regiment of the line, two brigades of artillery, and two troops of dragoons. The call sounded for parade, which we immediately obeyed; and when drawn up in the square, we were once more asked to comply with the king's commands. Despite the vast array of compulsive power before us, we to a man still adhered to our former resolution. The 11th were now placed in our front, supported on either side by the dragoons and artillery. After some little manœuvring, we were ordered to ground arms, which we did; to march into barracks, which we also did, but were not foolish enough to leave our muskets behind.

'A thousand curses on you, you rebellious Highland crew!' furiously shouted old C——, when he witnessed our doings.

Mad with rage, he commanded the 11th to load, &c. We, too, obeyed him, as if his orders had been addressed to us. We loaded, but not as the poor infantry loaded; they rammed home blank-cartridge—we, ball! Neither the general nor the poor soldiers guessed this, and we as little knew what they used. C——'s object was only to *frighten* us; but he reckoned without his host. Orders for the last time were now read, and we felt that the critical moment had arrived. Oh, how our hearts beat with anxiety for the issue! At length, the terrible word 'fire' was given, and ere the echo had passed away, shrieks and groans from wounded and dying men rent the murky atmosphere. Comrade turned towards comrade, and asked how it fared with him, and then it was the fearful discovery was made that our opponents' Fire had been only a sham! Great was their consternation, poor fellows, when they witnessed the havoc which our ball-cartridge had made in their ranks. Long before the smoke cleared away, they retreated helter-skelter from the scene—the gallant general taking the lead.

Here was a pretty fix to be in! The murderer's doom was sure to be each of ours—at least every one felt so, except one old sergeant.

'Plood, men!' exclaimed he, in Highland English, 'what pe ye fear'd o'? She (meaning the governor) pe her nainsel to plaim; she cried "fire," and we fired—that was only obeying orders.'

Despite this line of argument, we all felt more or less uncomfortable; but I daresay it was more on account of the dead and the dying soldiers than from the anticipation of any punishment we might receive. An hour was now spent in anxious deliberation regarding our next procedure, when it was finally resolved that we should remain where we were—doing duty as before, mounting guard, &c.; and as our small stock of ammunition was unexhausted, we determined, should a fresh force be brought against us, to act on the defensive, as we fully expected that, if it did come, it would come to kill, not to frighten!

For three days we remained in this state, without any sign of the 'enemy's' approach. Early in the morning of the fourth day, however, Sergeant Halliday, the acting officer of the guard then on duty, was accosted by a military-looking gentleman, who asked:

'Who is the officer on duty?'

'We have no officer,' was the sergeant's reply.

'Who commands the guard, then?' was the next query.

'I do,' answered Halliday, drawing himself up to his full height, as if he were 'somebody.'

'Beat to arms, and turn all out!' imperiously commanded the unknown.

'By whose orders?'

'By the orders of General Abercromby.'

In a twinkling, the call sounded 'To arms! to arms!' and each barrack-room was as quickly alive with commotion. Being very early, very few of us were out of bed when the alarm broke upon our ears, and, as a matter of course, nothing but hurry and confusion prevailed. Here might be seen a multitude fleeing to the yard with kilts, coats, and other articles of dress in their hands—there, a band with their coats on, but no kilt. Particular regard was paid to one thing, however—the musket. None forgot his 'Brown Bess,' although kilt and hose were wanting; for we imagined the 'enemy' were close at hand. When Sir Ralph saw the hurly-burly and sad confusion in which we were, he laughingly ordered us back to our rooms to dress, which order we cheerfully obeyed, after understanding who he was. Being now fully arrayed and drawn up in the square, we welcomed him with three Highland cheers. He then called the sergeants round him, and told them to inform us that he was commissioned by government to get our unfortunate affair settled, and requested to know what our grievances were, pledging his word of honour that we should receive justice.

Through our sergeants, we acquainted Sir Ralph with the whole history of the matter, telling him, as we told old C——, that we were still willing to serve our king and country in the service for which we enlisted, and that we decidedly objected to be changed into marines. He replied, that he was happy to learn that our loyalty remained unshaken, and hoped many of us would join the expedition of which he was on the eve of taking the command. Under the impression that we were to accompany him immediately, we expressed our willingness by making old Hilsea barrack-yard echo with our cheering. But he now told us that our regiment was disbanded—that we were no longer soldiers—that each was left to follow the bent of his own mind. He trusted, however, that none of us would leave the service. To those who wished to join the marines, a bounty of L.5 would be allowed; and to those who, disliking that service, entered the 42d or any of the other Highland regiments, L.4 of bounty would be given. No fewer than 500 chose the 42d; many, the other regiments; a few left the service entirely; and, notwithstanding our former antipathy, 300 of us joined the marines.

Thus was this serious mutiny amicably quelled by the adroitness of a sensible man. It is a curious history from first to last, and teaches an important lesson to those who have the command of troops. Government had obviously placed themselves in a false position, from which they could not have been honourably extricated, but by the expedient of Sir Ralph Abercromby. So far as I know, the particulars of this affair have never before been given; even Stewart, in his chapter on Mutinies, omitting to notice that of the Grant Highlanders.

RESEARCHES IN THE EAST.

I am a dweller among the denizens of the east end of London. I am not ashamed to say that I am better acquainted with that unpopular quarter of the metropolis than with the realms of fashion. To me, Mile End is more familiar than Mayfair; I know more of Bethnal Green than of Belgravia. I was born and bred among the vulgar thousands whose existence is ignored by the mighty west, and I have a fellow-feeling for them. It is true, a snug investment I have in the Three per Cents. would warrant me in taking a villa at Bayswater, or a lodge at Hampstead; but I prefer breathing my native air, which circles round the pleasant places of Whitechapel—an atmosphere redolent, it is true, of smoke and dust, and effluvium from sugar-bakeries, and sources of a still more questionable character, but still my native air, and therefore deserving my respect. I have made a study of my neighbours; I enjoy an extensive acquaintance with weavers, costermongers, and nondescripts. Every nook and corner of the surrounding district is familiar to me; the most secret *adyta* of that region little known have not escaped my search. Do you wish to know where the pickpockets live, or to find the sleeping-places of the myriad oyster-stalls, or to visit the hidden manufactories of ginger-beer and sherbet, so extensively patronised in the east? I shall be happy, gentle reader, to be your guide.

Let us take a ramble through these narrow streets that fill up the space between Hackney Road and Whitechapel. Branching out into a devious net-work on every hand—house-rows crowded so close upon each other, that opposite neighbours of a friendly disposition may almost shake hands across the street. Plenty of room here for the sluggish smoke to hover; plenty of room for the steaming exhalations from the open channel on each side, where the fetid water lies with prismatic scum upon its surface; but small space for the fresh breeze which *ought* to sweep in, and lift the murky curtain. Ah! it is never so light here as it is everywhere else. In summer, the sun-rays fall with subdued effect; in winter, the fog is densest here, and the smoke least willing to quit possession. In the great cyclorama, this part is 'cast discreetly into shade.' Look at these rows of houses four stories high, with windows nearly as broad as the rooms inside. These are the dwellings of the Spitalfields weavers, about whom there has been so much talk. You do not know that from this unpromising region come forth many of those glossy silks and velvets, whose choice texture and pleasant sheen attract the shoppers in Regent Street, and adorn the patrician damsels of the parks? If you listen, you will hear the dull clank of the looms, as the weavers work with hand and foot, and drive the shuttle for dear life. You would like to see the weaver at his work? I have a special friend in this house; let us go in. The dwelling is four stories high, two rooms on a floor; there is a family in each room, and the tenants are all weavers. My friend is busy at his loom; he tells me he has been 'at play' for several weeks, and now he has a large quantity of work to finish by Saturday morning. He must work day and night to get it done. He has a cheap newspaper before him, from which, when the silk is free from knots, and it is plain sailing, he reads a virulent attack upon a rotten ministry, or an eloquent analysis of the Treaty of Peace. My friend's name is Greenow (Grinnoneau); that of the man on the next floor is Lusany (Lusigné); that of the family at the back is Bonwell (Bonville). They are all, like a large proportion of these weavers, descendants of the French refugees who came over to England at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Their names, originally French, are clipped, and twisted, and mispronounced into an English form. My friend here can shew you his great-great-grandfather's Bible, with his name written in it by that worthy père who accompanied his flock in their flight to the land of liberty. There is his name, Jean François Grinnoneau, the date of his expatriation, and the names of his descendants, in lineal order, down to the present representative. This man cannot speak a word of French, is considerably John Bullish in his constitution, and claims the right of a native to grumble and abuse the powers that be. These weavers are the aristocracy of the neighbourhood, and, on the whole, they are a set of thinking men. They patronise cheap literary institutions, listen to lectures with decent composure, and are partakers in the benefits of certain ha'penny news-rooms, where they can keep pace with the course of events in the *Sun* and *Globe*, and follow the mettlesome leaders in the *Times*.

Leaving this region of silk-weaving, let us approach a little nearer to the city. Here we find the houses still more crowded, the thoroughfares ill paved, and undrained courts, with a choice of smells that might almost rival the 'two-and-seventy stenches' of Cologne. Here is a most unprepossessing *cul-de-sac:* at least, it looks like that; but if you go to the bottom, you will find a narrow archway that a casual observer might well overlook, which conducts into a court beyond. The people of the place are observing us; furtive glances are cast at us from behind window-curtains and doors ajar. Strangers do not often penetrate here; the scripture-reader and the city-missionary are the only visitors—except the policeman—who are not free of the fraternity.

Put your handkerchief in your breast-pocket, and button up your coat over your watch-chain; we are in the region of the pickpockets and thieves. I met with an adventure in this court some time since, which served to teach me its character. I was passing Whitechapel church one night, when I heard a light step in retreat behind me. I instinctively clapped my hand to my pocket—my handkerchief was gone. Turning round hastily, I caught sight of a boy running across the road, and thrusting something into his jacket as he ran. I gave chase. The urchin entered one of the by-streets at an easy pace; but finding himself pursued, soon struck off into the labyrinth of courts. Like an old hand, he doubled upon me, in and out, up one alley and down another. But I knew the ground well, and kept close up; and so away we went at a slashing rate, clattering over the rough flags, dashing into the slimy gutters; cheered on by the passengers whom we passed, and knocking down a placid policeman in our flight. At last, I ran him down in this very court. The boy began to whine and beg pardon in a much louder tone than was necessary; and having recovered my breath, I was just opening an oration on dishonesty, when whack! came my hat over my eyes, and a kick from an unknown source sent me prostrate on the ground. While thus prone and darkened, I heard the sound of a closing door; and on regaining my balance, my game had disappeared with my bandana, and the coast was clear. The young heathen frustrated my good intentions, for I meant to have sent him to some school or reformatory, whence he might in due time have come forth in the dignity of scarlet uniform, and have cleaned boots at a penny a pair. But it is growing dusk; and as my looks are too jovial for a city-missionary, and yours are too honest for a member of the free brotherhood, we had better wend our way elsewhere.

Here is a locality almost entirely inhabited by costermongers, an honourable guild. Yonder is a collection of the barrows, trucks, and other *impedimenta* of those who have sold out, or who are not on duty. The word costermonger, in the strict sense of the term, signifies a dealer in fruit; but it is applied also to the dealers in oysters, vegetables, garden-roots, &c. It was the observation of the illustrious Samuel Weller, that 'poverty and oysters seem to go together,' and here you cannot but be struck with the truth of the remark. Fruit-stalls are numerous, but oyster-stalls are far more so. At whatever hour of the day you may pass, you will see the lovers of that succulent luxury gratifying their taste. Either as an appetising preparation for breakfast, or a savoury substitute for supper, oysters seem to be infallible. In the western high places of affluence and pleasure, they never meet your view; but here, where squalid poverty and misery are so rife, they seem almost indigenous to the soil. Armed with the rusty pepper-box and the weakened vinegar, and with oysters opening before them, the inhabitants defy fate. There are no less than 80,000 costermongers in the east end of London. In these days of military spectacles, I should like to witness a review of the costermongers: 80,000 Tatars and Amazons, with their 80,000 barrows, would be a sight worth seeing. The discipline might not be very perfect, and the evolutions might not be very imposing; but give them the Russian administration of raki—or a substitute—and start them with the war-cries of Billingsgate and Covent Garden, and they would rival the charge at Balaklava.

You can gather but a faint idea of the deneness of the population from merely observing the number of the houses; you must take into the account the separate families, varying from four to sixteen, which each dwelling contains. Now, here is a street consisting of about thirty houses, and each house is tenanted, on an average, by sixteen families. If you would like to see how human beings can herd together, come with me into this house. Here is a room with a woman and five children in it; a rabbit-hutch in one corner, and a dog with a litter of puppies under the bed. The atmosphere is stifling. Ask the woman to set the window open; she replies that she did so one day last week, but that she will not do it again, for the children have had bad colds ever since. In the next room, a newly married couple are added to the tenant-family, in the capacity of lodgers; and thus there are two families, nine souls, with the usual addenda of birds, cats, &c., living and sleeping in one small room. In one apartment at the top dwells a maker of lucifer-matches, salamandering in fire and brimstone. The cellar is occupied by a compounder of villainous *eau sucrée*, which he dignifies by the title of ginger-beer. But here there is an unmistakable odour of something stronger and 'shorter' than that: a steamy vapour comes up in thin streams through the cracks in the boards, laden with the pungent smell of gin. 'Come, good woman, no use disguising it, there's a still at work in the cellar.' I have known half-a-dozen illicit stills in one parish—known to, and extensively patronised by the neighbours. The liquor is dispensed chiefly in ha'porths; and as customers get for their money about four times the quantity, and that of a far better quality than they would get at the 'palace' in the road, they are very ready to encourage private enterprise.

If you look at the map of London, you will observe that the district we have been traversing forms an irregular five-sided figure, bounded by the Hackney and Cambridge Roads, Bishopsgate Street, Houndsditch, and Whitechapel. As to area, this space is about one-thirtieth part of London; as to population, it is about one-eighth. Thus crowded together, epidemic diseases are always present with the inhabitants in some form or other. A fever acts here as a round-shot would do upon a close column of troops—a score are struck down, where only one would have fallen had the column been in open order. I saw this place in both the late visitations of cholera. Passing through a street during the first, I observed every house closed; I thought it a token of respect on occasion of the death or funeral of some person much esteemed; but, on inquiry, I found that every house had its own separate cause of mourning. During the height of the last attack, 600 interments a day was the average number for the seven or eight graveyards and cemeteries remaining unclosed in the neighbourhood. Many of these came from other parts, but still a frightful proportion from the district alluded to. Trooping on from early morning till late at night—hearse, and mute, and plume, in stately procession—coffins put through cab-windows, the relatives sitting face to face, with the corpse between them—or decently boxed under foot of the mourners in a patent vehicle, or humbly borne on men's shoulders to its last abode. For weeks together, during the daytime, I never looked from my window, I never stirred abroad in the street, without seeing one or more of these sad processions.

There is one redeeming feature amidst all this dirt, and smoke, and pestilential closeness—there is a park close by, with lakes, and pampered water-fowl, and trees of actual green, and its very grass enchanting to the half-stifled thousands who nightly flock to it for a breath of air. Were it not for this, the state of this part would be even more hideous than it is. This mitigates the evil; but how to remedy it is a question for the wise. When the value of health and life shall be reckoned above the value of property—when sanitary boards shall be more than a mere name—in that good time coming which requires such a telescopic faith to discern its approach; then may the east become habitable and healthy, and its people enjoy their due heritage of God's light and air.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER V.—MY CAPTIVE.

'*Do not kill me, sir! I am a woman!*'

This declaration scarcely astonished me; I was half prepared for it. During our wild gallop, I had noticed one or two circumstances which led me to suspect that the spy I pursued was a female. As the mustang sprang over the zequia, the flowing skirt of the manga was puffed upward, and hung for some moments spread out in the air. A velvet bodice beneath, a tunic-like skirt, the *tournure* of the form, all impressed me as singular for a cavallero, however rich and young. The limbs I could not see, as the goat-skin *armas-de-agua* were drawn over them; but I caught a glimpse of a gold spur, and the heel of a tiny red boot to which it was attached. The clubbed hair, too, loosened by the violent motion, sprang backward, and in two thick plaits, slightly dishevelled, rested upon the croup of the horse. A young Indian's might have done so, but *his* tresses would have been jet-black and coarse-grained, whereas those under my eyes were soft, silky, and nut-brown. Neither the style of riding—*à la Duchesse de Berri*—nor the manlike costume of manga and hat, hindered me from forming my conclusions. Both the style and costume are common to the *rancheras* of Mexico. Moreover, as the mustang made his last double, I had caught a near view of the side face of his rider. The features of no man—not the Trojan shepherd, not Adonis nor Endymion—were so exquisitely chiseled as they. Certainly a woman! Her declaration at once put an end to my conjectures, but, as I have said, did not astonish me.

I *was* astonished, however, by its tone and manner. Instead of being uttered in accents of alarm, it was pronounced as coolly as if the whole thing had been a jest! Sadness, not supplication, was the prevailing tone, which was further confirmed as she knelt to the ground, pressed her lips to the muzzle of the still breathing mustang, and exclaimed:

'*Ay-de-mi! pobre yegua! muerte! muerte!*' (Alas me! poor mare! dead! dead!)

'A woman?' said I, feigning astonishment. My interrogatory was unheeded; she did not even look up.

'*Ay-de-mi! pobre yegua! Lola, Lolita!*' she repeated, as coolly as if the dead mustang was the only object of her thoughts, and I, the armed assassin, fifty miles from the spot!

'You say you are a woman?' I again asked—in my embarrassment scarcely knowing what to say.

'*Si, señor; nada mas—que quiere V.?*' (Yes, sir; nothing more—what do you want?) As she made this reply, she rose to her feet, and stood confronting me without the slightest semblance of fear. So unexpected was the answer, both in tone and sentiment, that for the life of me I could not help breaking into a laugh.

'You are merry, sir. You have made *me* sad; you have killed my favourite!'

I shall not easily forget the look that accompanied these words—sorrow, anger, contempt, defiance, were expressed in one and the same glance. My laughter was suddenly checked; I felt humiliated in that proud presence.

'Señorita,' I replied, 'I deeply regret the necessity I have been under: it might have been worse'——

'And how, pray?—how worse?' demanded she, interrupting me.

'My pistol might have been aimed at *yourself*, but for a suspicion'——

'*Carrambo!*' cried she, again interrupting me, 'it could not have been worse! I loved that creature dearly—dearly as I do my life—*as I love my father—pobre yegua—yeguita—ita—ita!*'

And as she thus wildly expressed herself, she bent down, passed her arms around the neck of the mustang, and once more pressed her lips to its velvet cheek. Then gently closing its eyelids, she rose to an erect attitude, and stood with folded arms, regarding the lifeless form with a sad and bitter expression of countenance.

I scarcely knew what to say. I was in a dilemma with my fair captive. I would have given a month of my 'pay-roll' to have restored the spotted mustang to life; but as that was out of the question, I bethought me of some means of making restitution to its owner. An offer of money would not be delicate. What then?

A thought occurred to me, that promised to relieve me from my embarrassment. The eagerness of the rich Mexicans to obtain our large American horses—*frisones*, as they term them—was well known throughout the army. Fabulous prices were often paid for them by these *ricos*, who wanted them for display upon the *Paseo*. We had many good half-bred bloods in the troop; one of these, thought I, might be acceptable, even to a lady who had lost her pet. I made the offer as delicately as I could. It was rejected with scorn!

'What, señor!' cried she, striking the ground with her foot till the rowels rang—'what? A horse to me?—*Mira!*' she continued, pointing to the plain: 'look there, sir! There are a thousand horses; they are mine. Now, know the value of your offer. Do I stand in need of a horse?'

'But, señorita,' stammered I apologisingly, 'these are horses of native race. The one I propose to'——

'Bah!' she exclaimed, interrupting me, and pointing to the mustang; 'I would not have exchanged *that native* for all the frisones in your troop. Not one of them was its equal!'

A personal slight would not have called forth a contradiction; yet this defiance had that effect. She had touched the chord of my vanity—I might almost say, of my affection. With some pique I replied:

'*One*, señorita?'

I looked towards Moro as I spoke. Her eyes followed mine, and she stood for some moments gazing at him in silence. I watched the expression of her eye; I saw it kindle into admiration as it swept over the gracefully curving outlines of my noble steed. He looked at the moment superb; the short skurry had drawn the foam from his lips, and flakes of it clung against his neck and counter, contrasting finely with the shining black of his skin; his sides heaved and fell in regular undulations, and the smoke issued from his blood-red nostrils; his eye was still on fire, and his neck proudly arched, as though conscious of his late triumph, and the interest he was now exciting.

For a long while she stood gazing upon him, and though she spoke not a word, I saw that she recognised his fine points.

'You are right, cavallero,' said she at length, thoughtfully; 'he *is*.'

Just then, a series of reflections were passing through my mind, that rendered me extremely uncomfortable; and I felt regret that I had so pointedly drawn her attention to the horse. Would she demand *him?* That was the thought that troubled me. I had not promised her *any* horse in my troop, and Moro I would not have given for her herd of a thousand; but on the strength of the offer I had made, what if she should fancy *him?* The circumstances were awkward for a refusal; indeed, under any circumstances refusal would have been painful. I began to feel that I could deny nothing. This proud, beautiful woman already *divided my interest with Moro!*

My position was a delicate one; fortunately, I was relieved from it by an incident that carried our thoughts into a new current: the troopers who had followed me at that moment rode up.

She seemed uneasy at their presence; that could not be wondered at, considering their wild garb and fierce looks. I ordered them back to their quarters. They stared for a moment at the fallen mustang with its rich blood-stained trappings, at its late rider, and her picturesque garments; and then, muttering a few words to one another, obeyed the order. I was once more alone with my captive.

CHAPTER VI.

ISOLINA DE VARGAS.

As soon as the men were out of hearing, she said interrogatively: '*Tejanos?*'

'Some of them are Texans—not all.'

'You are their chief?'

'I am.'

'Capitan, I presume?'

'That is my rank.'

'And now, Señor Capitan, am I your captive?'

The question took me by surprise, and, for the moment, I did not know what answer to make. The excitement of the chase, the encounter, and its curious developments—perhaps, above all other things, the bewitching beauty of my captive—had driven out of my mind the whole purpose of the pursuit; and for some minutes I had not been thinking of any result. The interrogatory reminded me that I had a delicate duty to perform. Was this lady a *spy?*

Such a supposition was by no means improbable, as any old campaigner can testify. 'Fair ladies—though never one so fair as she—have, ere now, served their country in this fashion. She may be the bearer of some important dispatch for the enemy. If so, and I permit her to go free, the consequences may be serious—unpleasant even to myself.' Thus ran my reflections.

On the other hand, I disliked the duty of taking her back a prisoner. I feared to execute it; I dreaded *her* displeasure. *I wished to be friends with her.* I felt the influence of that mysterious power which transcends all strength—the power of beauty. I had been but ten minutes in the company of this brown-skinned maiden, and already she controlled my heart as though she had been its mistress for life!

I knew not how to reply. She saw that I hesitated, and again put the question:

'Am I your captive?'

'I fear, señorita, I am *yours.*'

I was prompted to this declaration, partly to escape from a direct answer, and partly giving way to the passion already fast gathering in my bosom. It was no coquetry on my part, no desire to make a pretty passage of words. Though I spoke only from impulse, I was serious; and with no little anxiety did I watch the effect of my speech.

Her large lustrous eyes rested upon me, at first with a puzzled expression; this gradually changed to one of more significance—one that pleased me better. She seemed for a moment to throw aside her indifference, and regarded me with more attention. I fancied, from the glance she gave, that she was contented with what I had said. For all that, the slight curl upon her pretty lip had a provoking air of triumph in it; and she resumed her proud *hauteur* as she replied:

'Come, cavallero; this is idle compliment. Am I free to go?'

I wavered betwixt duty and over-politeness: a compromise offered itself.

'Lady,' said I, approaching her, and looking as seriously as I could into her beautiful eyes, 'if you give me your word that you are *not a spy*, you are free to go: your word—I ask nothing more.'

I prescribed these conditions rather in a tone of entreaty than command. I affected sternness, but my countenance must have mocked me.

My captive broke into unrestrained laughter, crying out at intervals:

'I a spy!—a spy! Ha, ha, ha! Señor Capitan, you are jesting?'

'I hope, señorita, *you* are in earnest. You are no spy, then?—you bear no dispatch for our enemy?'

'Nothing of the sort, mio capitan;' and she continued her light laughter.

'Why, then, did you try to make away from us?'

'Ah, cavallero! are you not Tejanos? Do not be offended when I tell you that your people bear but an indifferent reputation among us Mexicans.'

'But your attempt to escape was, to say the least, rash and imprudent: you risked life by it.'

'*Carrambo*, yes! I perceive I did;' and she looked significantly at the mustang, while a bitter smile played upon her lips. 'I perceive it now; I did not then. I did not think there was a horseman in all your troop could come up with me. *Merced!* there was *one*. *You* have overtaken me: *you alone* could have done it.'

As she uttered these words, her large brown eyes were once more turned upon me—not in a fixed gaze, but wandering. She scanned me from the forage-cap on my crown to the spur upon my heel. I watched her eye with eager interest: I fancied that its scornful expression was giving way; I fancied there was a ray of tenderness in the glance. I would have given the world to have divined her thoughts at that moment.

Our eyes met, and parted in mutual embarrassment—at least I fancied so; for on turning again, I saw that her head drooped, and her gaze was directed downward, as if some new thought occupied her.

For some moments, both were silent. We might have remained longer thus, but it occurred to me that I was acting rudely. The lady was still my captive. I had not yet given her permission to depart: I hastened to tender it.

'Spy or no spy, señorita, I shall not detain you. I shall bear the risk: you are free to go.'

'*Gracias! cavallero!* And now, since you have behaved so handsomely, I shall set your mind at rest about the *risk*. Read!'

She handed me a folded paper; at a glance, I recognised the *safe-guard* of the commander-in-chief, enjoining upon all to respect its bearer—the *Doña Isolina de Vargas.*

'You perceive, mio capitan, I was not your captive after all? ha! ha! ha!'

'Lady, you are too generous not to pardon the rudeness to which you have been subjected?'

'Freely, capitan—freely.'

'I shudder at thought of the risk you have run. Why did you act with such imprudence? Your sudden flight at sight of our picket caused suspicion, and of course it was our duty to follow and capture you. With the safe-guard, you had no cause for flight.'

'Ha! it was that very safe-guard that caused me to fly.'

'The safe-guard, señorita? Pray, explain!'

'Can I trust *your* prudence, capitan?'

'I promise'——

'Know, then, that I was not certain you were *Americanos;* for aught I could see, you might have been a guerilla of my *countrymen.* How would it be if this paper, and sundry others I carry, were to fall into the hands of Canales? You perceive, capitan, we fear our *friends* more than our *enemies.*'

I now fully comprehended the motive of her wild flight.

'You speak Spanish too well, mio capitan,' continued she. 'Had you cried "Halt!" in your native tongue, I should at once have pulled up, and perhaps saved my pet. Ah, me!—*pobre yegua!*'

As she uttered the last exclamation, her feelings once more overcame her; and sinking down upon her knees, she passed her arms around the neck of the mustang, now stiff and cold. Her face was buried in the long thick mane, and I could perceive the tears sparkling like dew-drops over the tossed hair.

'*Pobre Lola,*' she continued, 'I have good cause to grieve; I had reason to love you well. More than once you saved me from the fierce Lipan and the brutal Comanche. What am I to do now? I dread the Indian foray; I shall tremble at every sign of the savage. I dare no more venture upon the prairie; I dare not go abroad; I must tamely stay at home. *Mia querida!* you were my wings: they are clipped—I fly no more.'

All this was uttered in a tone of extreme bitterness; and I, I who so loved my brave steed, could appreciate her feelings. With the hope of imparting even a little consolation, I repeated my offer.

'Señorita,' I said, 'I have swift horses in my troop—some of noble race'——

'You have no horse in your troop I value.'

'You have not seen them all?'

'All—every one of them—to-day, as you filed out of the city.'

'Indeed?'

'Indeed, yes, noble capitan. I saw you as you carried yourself so cavalierly at the head of your troop of *filibusteros*—ha, ha, ha!'

'Señorita, I saw not you.'

'*Carrambo!* it was not for the want of using your eyes. There was not a *balcon* or *reja* into which you did not glance—not a smile in the whole street you did not seem anxious to reciprocate—ha, ha, ha! I fear, Señor Capitan, you are the Don Juan de Tenorio of the North.'

'Lady, it is not my character.'

'Nonsense! you are proud of it. I never saw man who was not. But come! a truce to badinage. About the horse—you have none in your troop I value, save *one*.'

I trembled as she spoke.

'It is *he*,' she continued, pointing to Moro.

I felt as if I should sink into the earth. My embarrassment prevented me for some time from replying. She noticed my hesitation, but remained silent, awaiting my answer.

'Señorita,' I stammered out at length, 'that steed is a great favourite—an old and tried friend. *If* you desire—to possess him, he is—he is at your service.'

In emphasizing the 'if,' I was appealing to her generosity. It was to no purpose.

'Thank you,' she replied coolly; 'he shall be well cared for. No doubt he will serve my purpose. *How is his mouth?*'

I was choking with vexation, and could not reply. I began to hate her.

'Let me try him,' continued she. 'Ah! you have a curb bit—that will do; but it is not equal to ours. I use a mameluke. Help me to that lazo.'

She pointed to a lazo of white horsehair, beautifully plaited, that was coiled upon the saddle of the mustang.

I unloosed the rope—mechanically I did—and in the same way adjusted it to the horn of my saddle. I noticed that the noose-ring was of silver! I shortened the leathers to the proper length.

'Now, capitan!' cried she, gathering the reins in her small gloved hand—'now I shall see how he performs.'

At the word, she bounded into the saddle, her small foot scarcely touching the stirrup. She had thrown off her manga, and her woman's form was now displayed in all its undulating outlines. The silken skirt draped down to her ankles, and underneath appeared the tiny red boot, the glancing spur, and the lace ruffle of her snow-white *calzoncillas*. A scarlet sash bound her waist, with its fringed ends drooping to the saddle; and the tight bodice, lashed with lace, displayed the full rounding of her bosom, as it rose and fell in quiet, regular breathing—for she seemed in no way excited or nervous. Her full round eye expressed only calmness and courage.

I stood transfixed with admiration. I thought of the Amazons: were they beautiful like her? With a troop of such warriors one might *conquer a world!*

A fierce-looking bull, moved by curiosity or otherwise, had separated from the herd, and was seen approaching the spot where we were. This was just what the fair rider wanted. At a touch of the spur, the horse sprang forward, and galloped directly for the bull. The latter, cowed at the sudden onset, turned and ran; but his swift pursuer soon came within lazo distance. The noose circled in the air, and, launched forward, was seen to settle around the horns of the animal. The horse was now wheeled round, and headed in an opposite direction. The rope tightened with a sudden pluck, and the bull was thrown with violence on the plain, where he lay stunned and apparently lifeless. Before he had time to recover himself, the rider turned her horse, trotted up to the prostrate animal, bent over in the saddle, unfastened the noose, and, after coiling it upon her arm, came galloping back.

'Superb!—magnificent!' she exclaimed, leaping from the saddle and gazing at the steed. 'Beautiful!—most beautiful! Ah, Lola, poor Lola! I fear I shall soon forget thee!' The last words were addressed to the mustang. Then turning to me, she added: 'And this horse is mine?'

'Yes, lady, if you will it,' I replied somewhat cheerlessly, for I felt as if my best friend was about to be taken from me.

'But I do *not* will it,' said she with an air of determination; and then breaking into a laugh, she cried out: 'Ha! capitan, I know your thoughts. Think you I cannot appreciate the sacrifice you would make? Keep your favourite. Enough that one of us should suffer;' and she pointed to the mustang. 'Keep the brave black; you well know how to ride him. Were he mine, no mortal could influence me to part with him.'

'There is *but one* who could influence *me*.'

As I said this, I looked anxiously for the answer. It was not in words I expected it, but in the glance. Assuredly there was no frown; I even fancied I could detect a smile—a blending of triumph and satisfaction. It was short-lived, and my heart fell again under her light laugh.

'Ha-ha-ha! That one is of course your lady-love. Well, noble capitan, if you are true to her, as to your brave steed, she will have no cause to doubt your fealty. I must leave you. Adios!'

'Shall I not be permitted to accompany you to your home?'

'*Gracias!* no, señor. I am at home. *Mira!* my father's house!' She pointed to the hacienda. 'Here is one who will look to the remains of poor Lola;' and she signaled to a vaquero at that moment coming from the herd. 'Remember, capitan, you are an enemy; I must not accept your politeness; neither may I offer you hospitality. Ah! you know not us—you know not the tyrant Santa Anna. Perhaps even at this moment his spies are'—— She glanced suspiciously around as she spoke. 'O Heavens!' she exclaimed with a start, as her eyes fell upon the form of a man advancing down the hill. '*Santissima Virgen!* it is Ijurra!'

'Ijurra?'

'Only my cousin; but'—— She hesitated, and then suddenly changing to an expression of entreaty, she continued: 'O leave me, señor! *Por amor Dios!* leave me! Adieu, adieu!'

Though I longed to have a nearer view of 'Ijurra,' the hurried earnestness of her manner overcame me; and without making other reply than a simple 'Adios,' I vaulted into my saddle, and rode off.

On reaching the border of the woods, curiosity—a stronger feeling perhaps—mastered my politeness; and, under the pretence of adjusting my stirrup, I turned in the saddle, and glanced back. Ijurra had arrived upon the ground. I beheld a tall dark man, dressed in the usual costume of the ricos of Mexico: dark cloth polka-jacket, blue military trousers, with scarlet sash around his waist, and low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat upon his head. He appeared about thirty years of age, whiskered, moustached, and, after a fashion, handsome. It was not his age, nor his personal appearance, nor yet his costume that had my attention at the moment. I watched only his actions. He stood confronting his cousin, or rather he stood *over* her, for she appeared to cower before him in an attitude of fear! He held a paper in one hand, and I saw he was pointing to it as he spoke. There was a fierce, vulture-like expression upon his face; and even in the distance I could tell, from the tones of his voice, that he was talking angrily. Why should she fear *him?* Why submit to such rude rebuke? He must have a strange power over that spirit who could force it thus tamely to listen to reproach?

These were my reflections. My impulse was to drive the spurs into the sides of my horse, and gallop back upon the ground. I might have done so had the scene lasted much longer; but I saw the lady suddenly leave the spot, and walk rapidly in the direction of the hacienda.

I wheeled round again, and plunging under the shadows of the forest, soon fell into a road leading to the rancheria. My thoughts full of the incident that had just passed, I rode unconsciously, leaving my horse to his own guidance. My reverie was interrupted by the challenge of one of my own sentries, which admonished me that I had arrived at the entrance of the village.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ORDER TO FORAGE.

My adventure did not end with the day; it was continued into the night, and repeated in my dreams. I rode the chase over again; I dashed through the magueys, I leaped the *zequia*, and galloped through the affrighted herd; I beheld the spotted mustang stretched lifeless upon the plain, its rider bending and weeping over it. That face of rare beauty, that form of exquisite proportion, that eye rotund and noble, that tongue so free, and heart so bold—all were again encountered in dreamland. A dark face was in the vision, and at intervals crossed the picture like a cloud. It was the face of Ijurra.

I think it was that awoke me, but the *reveillé* of the bugle was in my ears as I leaped from my couch.

For some moments I was under the impression that the adventure had been a dream: an object that hung on the opposite wall came under my eyes, and recalled the reality—it was my saddle, over the holsters of which lay a coil of white horsehair rope, with a silver ring at the end. I remembered the lazo.

When fairly awake, I reviewed my yesterday's adventure from first to last. I tried to think calmly upon it; I tried to get it out of my thoughts, and return seriously to my duties. A vain attempt! The more I reflected upon the incident, the more I became conscious of the powerful interest its heroine had excited within me. Interest, indeed! Say rather *passion*—a passion that in one single hour had grown as large as my heart!

It was not the *first* love of my life. I was nigh thirty years of age. I had been enamoured before—more than once, it may be—and I understood what the feeling was. I needed no Cupid to tell me I was in love again—to the very ends of my fingers.

To paint the object of my passion is a task I shall not attempt. Beauty like hers must be left to the imagination. Think of the woman you *yourself* love or have loved; fancy her in her fairest moments, in bower or boudoir—perchance a blushing bride—and you may form some idea—— No, no, no! you could never have looked upon woman so lovely as Isolina de Vargas.

Oh! that I could fix that fleeting phantom of beauty—that I could paint that likeness for the world to admire! It cannot be. The most puissant pen is powerless, the brightest colour too cold. Though deeply graven upon the tablets of my heart, I cannot multiply the impression.

It is idle to talk of wavy hair, profuse and glossed—of almond eyes with long dark fringes—of pearl-white teeth, and cheeks tinted with damascene. All these had she, but they are not peculiar characteristics. Other women are thus gifted. The traits of *her* beauty lay in the intellectual as much as the physical—in a happy combination of both. The soul, the spirit, had its share in producing this incomparable picture. It was to behold the play of those noble features, to watch the changing cheek, the varying smile, the falling lash, the flashing eye, the glance now tender, now sublime—it was to look on all this, to be impressed with an idea of the divinest loveliness.

* * * *

As I ate my frugal breakfast, such a vision was passing before me. I contemplated the future with pleasant hopes, but not without feelings of uneasiness. I had not forgotten the abrupt parting—no invitation to renew the acquaintance, no hope, no prospect that I should ever behold that beautiful woman again, unless blind chance should prove my friend.

I am not a fatalist, and I therefore resolved not to rely upon mere destiny, but, if possible, to help it a little in its evolution.

Before I had finished my coffee, a dozen schemes had passed through my mind, all tending towards one object—the renewal of my acquaintance with Isolina de Vargas. Unless favoured by some lucky accident, or, what was more desirable, *by the lady herself*, I knew we might never meet again. In such times, it was not likely she would be much 'out of doors;' and in a few days, hours perhaps, *I* might be ordered *en route* never more to return to that interesting outpost. As the district was, of course, under martial law, and I was *de facto* dictator, you will imagine that I might easily procure the right of entry anywhere. Not so. Whatever be the licence of the rude soldier as regards the common people of a conquered country, the position of the officer with its higher class is essentially different. If a gentleman, he naturally feels a delicacy in making any advances towards an acquaintance; and his honour restrains him from the freer forms of introduction. To take advantage of his position of power would be a positive meanness, of which a true gentleman cannot be guilty. Besides, there may be rancour on the part of the conquered—there usually is; but even when no such feeling exists, another barrier stands in the way of free association between the officer and 'society.' The latter feels that the position of affairs will not be permanent; the enemy will in time evacuate, and then the vengeance of mob-patriotism is to be dreaded. Never did the ricos of Mexico feel more secure than while under the protection of the American army. Many of them were disposed to be friendly, but the phantom of the future, with its mob *emeutes*, stared them in the face, and under this dread they were forced to adopt a hypocritical exclusiveness. Epaulettes must not be seen glancing through the windows of their drawing-rooms!

Under such circumstances, my situation was difficult enough. I might gaze upon the outside walls of that handsome hacienda till my heart ached, but how was I to effect an entrance?

To charge a fort, a battery, an intrenched camp—to storm a castle, or break a solid square—one or all would have been child's play compared with the difficulty of crossing that glacial line of etiquette that separated me from my beautiful enemy.

To effect this purpose, a dozen schemes were passed through my mind, and rejected, till my eyes at length rested upon the most interesting object in the apartment—the little white rope that hung upon my saddle-bow. In the lazo, I recognised my 'forlorn-hope.' That pretty implement must be returned to its owner. *I myself should take it home!* So far *destiny* should be guided by *me;* beyond, I should have to put my trust in destiny.

I think best under the influence of a cigar; and lighting one, I ascended to the azotea, to complete my little scheme.

I had scarcely made two turns of the roof, when a horseman galloped into the plazza. He was in dragoon uniform, and I saw he was an orderly from head-quarters, and inquiring for the commander of the outpost. One of the men pointed to me; and the orderly trotting forward, drew up in front of the alcaldé's house, and announced to me that he was the bearer of a dispatch from the general-in-chief, at the same time shewing a folded paper. I directed him to pass it up on the point of his sabre, which he did; and then saluting me, he turned his horse and galloped back as he had come.

I opened the dispatch, and read:

'HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION.
July —th, 1846.

SIR—You will take a sufficient number of your men, and proceed to the hacienda of Don Ramon de Vargas, in the neighbourhood of your station. You will there find 5000 head of beeves, which you will cause to be driven to the camp of the American army, and delivered to the commissary-general. You will find the necessary drivers upon the ground, and a portion of your troop will form the escort. The enclosed *note* will enable you to understand the nature of your duty.

——— ————,
CAPTAIN WARFIELD. A. A. Adjutant-general.'

'Surely,' thought I, as I finished reading—'surely there is a "Providence that shapes our ends." Just as I was cudgelling my brains for some scheme of introduction to Don Ramon de Vargas, here comes one ready fashioned to my hand.'

I thought no more about the lazo: the rope was no longer an object of prime interest. Trimmed and embellished with the graceful excuse of 'duty,' I should now ride boldly up to the hacienda, and enter its gates with the confident air of a welcome guest. Welcome indeed! A contract for 5000 beeves, and at war-prices! A good stroke of business on the part of the old Don. Of course, I shall see him—'embrace him'—hobnob with him over a glass of Canario or Xeres—get upon the most intimate terms, and so be 'asked back.' I am usually popular with old gentlemen, and I trusted to my bright star to place me *en rapport* with Don Ramon de Vargas. The coralling of the cattle would occupy some time—a brace of hours at the least. That would be outside work, and I could intrust it to my lieutenant or a sergeant. For myself, I was determined to stay by the walls. The Don must go out to look after his vaqueros. It would be rude to leave me alone. He would introduce me to his daughter—he could not do less: a customer on so large a scale! We should be left to ourselves, and then—— Ha! Ijurra! I had forgotten *him*. Would *he* be there?

The recollection of this man fell like a shadow over the bright fancies I had conjured up.

A dispatch from head-quarters calls for prompt attention, and my reflections were cut short by the necessity of carrying the order into execution. Without loss of time, I issued orders for about fifty of the rangers to 'boot and saddle.'

I was about to give more than ordinary attention to my toilet, when it occurred to me I might as well first read the 'note' referred to in the dispatch. I opened the paper; to my surprise, the document was in Spanish. This did not puzzle me, and I read:

'The 5000 beeves are ready for you, according to the contract, but *I* cannot take upon me to deliver them. *They must be taken from me* with a *show of force;* and even a *little rudeness* on the part of those you send would not be out of place. My vaqueros are at your service, but *I* must not command them. You may *press* them. RAMON DE VARGAS.'

This note was addressed to the commissary-general of the American army. Its meaning, though to the uninitiated a little obscure, was to me as clear as noonday; and although it gave me a high opinion of the administrative talents of Don Ramon de Vargas, it was by no means a welcome document. It rendered null every act of the fine programme I had sketched out. By its directions, there was to be no 'embracing,' no hobnobbing over wine, no friendly chat with the Don, no *tête-à-tête* with his beautiful daughter—no; but, on the contrary, I was to ride up with a swagger, bang the doors, threaten the trembling porter, kick the peons, and demand from their master 5000 head of beef-cattle—all in true freebooting style!

A nice figure I shall cut, thought I, in the eyes of Isolina; but a little reflection convinced me that that intelligent creature would be in the secret. Yes, she will understand my motives. I can act with as much mildness as circumstances will permit. My Texan lieutenant will do the kicking of the peons, and that without much pressing. If she be not cloistered, I will have a glimpse at her; so here goes. '*To horse!*'

The bugle gave the signal; fifty rangers—with Lieutenants Holingsworth and Wheatley—leaped into their saddles, and next moment were filing by twos from the plazza, myself at their head.

A twenty minutes' trot brought us to the front gate of the hacienda, where we halted. The great door, massive and jail-like, was closed, locked, and barred; the shutters of the windows as well. Not a soul was to be seen outside, not even the apparition of a frightened peon. I had given my Texan lieutenant his cue; he knew enough of Spanish for the purpose.

Flinging himself out of the saddle, he approached the gate, and commenced hammering upon it with the butt of his pistol.

'*Ambre la puerta!*' (Open the door!) cried he.

No answer.

'*La puerta—la puerta!*' he repeated in a louder tone.

Still no answer.

'*Ambre la puerta!*' once more vociferated the lieutenant, at the same time thundering on the woodwork with his weapon.

When the noise ceased, a faint '*Quien es?*' (Who is it?) was heard from within.

'*Yo!*' bawled Wheatley, '*ambre! ambre!*'

'*Si, señor,*' answered the voice, in a somewhat tremulous key.

'*Anda! anda! Somos hombres de bien.*' (Quick then! We are honest men.)

A rattling of chains and shooting of bolts now commenced, and lasted for at least a couple of minutes, at the end of which time the great folding-doors opened inward, displaying to view the swarthy leather-clad *portero*, the brick-paved *saguan*, and a portion of the *patio*, or courtyard within.

As soon as the door was fairly open, Wheatley made a rush at the trembling porter, caught him by the jerkin, boxed both his ears, and then commanded him, in a loud voice, to summon the *dueño!* This conduct, somewhat unexpected on the part of the rangers, seemed to be just to their taste; and I could hear behind me the whole troop chuckling in half-suppressed laughter. *Guerilleros* as they were, they had never been allowed much licence in their dealings with the inhabitants—the non-combatants—of the country, and much less had they witnessed such conduct on the part of their officers. Indeed, it was cause of complaint in the ranks of the American army, and with many officers too, that even hostile Mexicans were treated with a lenient consideration denied to themselves. Wheatley's behaviour, therefore, touched a chord in the hearts of our following, that vibrated pleasantly enough; they began to believe that the campaign was about to become a little more jolly.

'*Señor,*' stammered the porter, 'the du—du—dueño has given or—orders—he wi—wi—will not s—see any one.'

'*Will* not!' echoed Wheatley; 'go, tell him he *must!*'

'Yes, *amigo,*' I said soothingly; for I began to fear the man would be too badly frightened to deliver his message. 'Go, say to your master that an American officer has business with him, and *must* see him immediately.'

The man went off, after a little more persuasion from the free hand of Wheatley, of course leaving the gates open behind him.

We did not wait for his return. The patio looked inviting; and directing Holingsworth to remain outside with the men, and the Texan lieutenant to follow me, I headed my horse for the great archway, and rode in.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUTE LAWS OF ENGLAND.

The consolidation of the statute laws of England has been often attempted, but hitherto the scheme has always failed. Various causes led to this result: the members of the old commission spent their time in quarrelling; they tried to write each other down, and published all sorts of accusations and recriminations against each other; and until last session, every one thought the question was disposed of for many years.

Last session, however, the commission was reformed, and Sir Fitzroy Kelly, although an opponent of the present government, consented to waive political feeling, and undertook, unpaid and unrewarded, the laborious duty of heading it. For the time, toil and personal labour he will have to give to this duty, it may be doubted whether L.7000 per annum would recompense him. Sir Fitzroy Kelly, however, has absolute authority to do the work in his own way, employing gentlemen at the bar of competent skill and experience to assist, and paying them for such assistance at his own discretion. It is also understood that the work, when done, is to be accepted as it is, and parliament is to be asked to take the consolidation bills in their integrity, and, in reliance upon the commission, to pass them without debate upon their provisions, in faith that they are not a new law, but merely the existing law, collected and arranged in an orderly manner.

In answer to the inquiries of the great law-reformer, Lord Brougham, as to 'the state and prospects of the consolidation of the statute law,' Sir Fitzroy Kelly, after mentioning his appointment, thus states the mode in which the work is to be done: 'To consolidate the statute law, is to take the statutes at large from Magna Charta to the last act of Victoria; to expunge and reject from the statute-book every act and every enactment which is either repealed, expired, or obsolete, and then to take what remains—which will consist of all that is law in force and to continue in force—to digest and to arrange this body of law by dividing it into classes, and subdividing each class into single subjects, and then to reduce the whole into single bills, each bill being on a single subject, but comprising the whole of that subject. The amendment of the statute-book is neither more nor less than the applying, by a series of new acts of parliament, a complete remedy to every grievance, every defect, and every evil which now exists in the statute law.'

The work was commenced in May last. Barristers were employed to go through the statutes at large, from Magna Charta to the 20th of Victoria; in short, to go through the entire statute-book, and having laid aside all the repealed and otherwise inoperative matter, to retain every act and enactment which is now in force, and intended to remain in force, and to digest and arrange this statute law in classes, and then subdivide each class into single bills upon single subjects; and, finally, to prepare, revise, and perfect the whole of these bills in one uniform style of phraseology, and upon one system of arrangement. Three classes were selected for a beginning: criminal law, real property law, and mercantile law. The criminal law was divided into eight bills. Barristers were employed to prepare these eight bills, detailed instructions for their guidance being previously laid before them. As a draft of each bill was ready, it was first inspected and revised by Sir Fitzroy Kelly and Mr Greaves, a member of the commission; and all difficulties that presented themselves were noted down for ulterior consideration, and the bills were then gone through and finally corrected by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, Lord Wensleydale, Lord Chief-justice Jervis, and Mr Greaves, assisted by Mr Brickdale, the secretary to the commission. This class, containing the whole of the criminal statute law, thus perfected, was submitted by the Lord Chancellor to the House of Lords at the close of last session. The other two classes, real property law and mercantile law, and several single bills constituting classes by themselves, are now in preparation upon the same principle, and will undergo the same process of revision, and will probably be ready to be laid before parliament on the first day of the ensuing session. Simultaneously with the consolidation of the public general statutes, is proceeding that of the local, personal, and private acts. If government and the two houses of parliament give the support and co-operation which are necessary, it is supposed the entire work will be completed in three years from the commencement.

The difficulties attending this herculean task are well described by Sir Fitzroy Kelly; he says: 'It is almost impossible to exaggerate the difficulties which attend the undertaking. The question continually arises—whether the enactments of several reigns, as of William III., or of the Georges, are virtually or impliedly repealed or varied by other enactments upon the same subject, and with the same intent in later acts, as of William IV. and Victoria? So, likewise, provisions were found of the highest constitutional importance in statutes of Anne and William III., for supplying copies of the indictments and lists of witnesses to persons indicted for high treason. (It was upon one of these that the point arose in Frost's case by which his life was saved, and the fifteen judges divided against each other—eight to seven, and nine to six.) Then other provisions with the same intent, and nearly same effect, but varying from those of William III. and Anne when read together, were found in acts of George III. and IV., William IV., and Victoria.' These could not be repeated verbatim without contradiction; the strict legal construction of these complicated acts had therefore to be decided upon. This was done by Lord Wensleydale, Lord Chief-justice Jervis, Sir Fitzroy Kelly, and Mr Greaves; but not without many days, says Sir Fitzroy Kelly, of anxious and careful research and deliberation. Other serious difficulties arose from the vicious practice of repealing acts or enactments by provision that 'so much of any former act of parliament heretofore made as is inconsistent with, or repugnant to, the act in question, shall be, and is thereby repealed.' This evil makes it necessary to go through the whole of the earlier acts operated upon by the later act, and to determine how much is repealed and how much is not; and other difficulties of equal magnitude have already arisen, and must be anticipated throughout the entire work.

The evils resulting from the present state of the statute-book are manifold; any one purchasing the statutes at large must pay the price of, and encumber his shelves with forty volumes, of which above thirty-five are filled with inoperative and worthless matter! These forty volumes contain above a million of enactments, without order or connection. Enactments upon totally different subjects and branches of the law are thrown together. Any one wishing to ascertain the law upon a given subject, must go through the whole confused mass of matter, and extract, as best he can, what is law. And, from this confusion, the acts themselves cannot be relied on in all cases as accurate. Thus, an act of Victoria cites in several places the 6th George IV., ch. 48, as the 5th George IV., ch. 43, which is an act upon a totally different subject; and misquotations, not only of the title, but of the language of former acts, are not wanting.

The present scheme of consolidation, involving as it does no alteration in the laws, is a grand one, and so far proves to be a successful one. But to insure complete success, it must have the full confidence of parliament. There must be no reviewal by the legislature; it must be taken or rejected in its entirety; for if each bill is to be debated in all its details in committee of both Houses, a century would not suffice for the work.

The result of consolidation will be, that all the evils detailed will be remedied: 40,000 statutes—of which 16,000 are upon public general law—will be reduced to between 300 and 400. Forty volumes of statutes will be reduced to five or six volumes, indispensable to statesmen, lawyers, magistrates, and public officers.

The doubts as to what is, and what is not repealed, will be cleared up. The difficulties, and consequently the great amount of litigation to which the present uncertainty gives rise, are beyond calculation. It has been thought that more than half the business of all the courts of law and equity in the kingdom consists of disputed questions upon the construction of acts of parliament. Again, so long as the statute-book remains in its existing state, it will be impossible to adopt a pure principle of legislation. Mr Brickdale well observes upon this subject: 'A member of either House about to bring in a bill, finds that a class is suffering injustice or inconvenience, in consequence of the state of the law, which it is his duty to remedy; but he has not before him, in any simple or accessible form, either the whole law, or the subject, or any statement of the principle of the law, which is the cause of the evil complained of: he therefore naturally contents himself with introducing a bill which remedies that specific evil, and no more: he even carefully avoids any appearance of interfering with principles, for fear of effecting something which he did not intend, or unintentionally opening questions which would lead to opposition, and perhaps frustrate his whole immediate object—the removal of the evil actually felt.'

LITERATURE AND LITERARY MEN.

What is literature? Is a playbill literature, even when it contains laborious antiquarianism, deep geographical inquiries as to the outline of Bithynia and disquisitions on the Pyrrhic dance, or the length of petticoat of the Virgins of the Sun? Is a sermon published 'by request' of a decent congregation—which fell asleep before it could hear the end of it—literature? Is an indignant letter (paid for as an advertisement), wherein Brutus Junior threatens a village church-warden for refusing him a sitting in church, literature? Are the letters, marked respectively 1, 2, 3, and 4, up to the round dozen, in the hostile correspondence between Swiffins, stock-broker, Fulham, and Snodge, drysalter, Muswell Hill, literature? Why did they quarrel about that Newfoundland dog, which came out all dripping from the Serpentine, and shook itself in the most snobbish manner over the apparel of a young lady, 'whose name it is needless to introduce in this very unpleasant affair' (but which we know to be Sophia Groby—old Groby's daughter, Fleet Street); and after a week's angry interchange of epistolary amenities, with fiery allusions to pistols for two (and no coffee), end by discovering that the sagacious Ponto meant no personal disrespect either to Swiffins or the interesting young lady whose name, &c., and that even if he had, he was not the property, and therefore not under the control, of Snodge, of Muswell Hill. Is this literature? I suppose it is; for judging from my own experience, most writings of the present day are literature, and most of the people you meet are literary men.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

A DREAM.

I HAD a vision! O'er my life
It shed so bright a gleam,
So very sweet, so very soft,
Alas! how could I deem
To see it reft, while I am left
To *know* it was a dream.

'Twas like some bright bird fluttering
Through that dark grove, my heart,
Bearing the sunshine of its wing
Even to the gloomiest part;
Now cold and dead, its sweet life fled,
Leaving this heavy smart.

Like a calm star to my spirit's depth
That gentle vision shone;
'Tis faded, but a strange pale flame
Still burneth fiercely on,
Raising its light in wild despite,
The ghost of what is gone.

Or I bear my dream like a dear friend dead,
To a home in my secret soul;
I must be alone, oh, quite alone,
Ere I weep without control:
I could not hear the harsh ones jeer,
Still less the kind condole.

In a very dark and silent room
It lieth concealed from all,
And I have covered its cold, stiff form
With a heavy funeral pall;
Yet I tremble and shrink as I sometimes think,
What, if the shroud should fall?

When the solemn hand has guided me
To the land I have in view,
And shewed me those I've sought in vain,
The loving and the true,
All grief that day shall have fled for aye,
Like the early morning-dew.

When I walk with a kindred soul at last
Beside heaven's crystal streams,
When truth shines down with unclouded light,
Instead of these fitful gleams,
Where the weary breast finds a lasting rest,
God grant there are no more dreams!

M. L. P.

NEW PROCESS OF VINIFICATION.

It has been discovered by analysation that the grape-substances giving out *colour*, *taste*, *bouquet*, *and flavour* to wine—namely, tartar, tannin, essential oil, and colouring matter—constitute only *one per cent.* of its composition, the remaining 99 per cent. consisting merely of sugar and water. It is this *one per cent.* alone which makes wine, distinguishes it from all other liquids, and bestows its different valuable qualities. It appears that the above-mentioned component parts, especially that which is most precious, the *essential oil*, are only one-fourth absorbed by the usual process of fermentation. There is therefore left undeveloped at the bottom of the fermenting tuns or vats 75 per cent. of flavour, &c., which, if saturated in a solution of refined sugar and water, will give out one-third of its unexhausted properties, which is sufficient to produce wine of a better quality than that derived from the natural must. This operation may be three times repeated with the same result; and even if tried a fourth time, will yield sufficient flavour to make a small description of vinous liquid. This discovery is due to the French chemists, who, on account of defective vintages, have deemed it worthy to investigate the subject.—*Ridley & Co.'s Monthly Circular.*

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AN EXCEEDINGLY CHEAP TOUR.

ALTHOUGH I am tolerably well off for a curate, in having nothing to pay for vegetables and house-rent, money—as far as it can be said of any churchman—is a considerable object to me. I have to save in this matter, and to go without in that, and to accustom my stomach a good deal to home-made wine. My surplice—the idea of a curate having such a thing!—is not of lawn, nor do I renew very often that miraculous silk garment without fastening, the getting into which is one of the mysteries of the Church of England. I read the wicked *Times*, on its third day, without feeling any of those disagreeable qualms with which it affects my revered rector, 'the cloth' it attacks being of a material very widely different from mine. I confess, however, that my own clerical character falls considerably short of the ideal standard set up by the conductors of that journal. I think it no sin in a bachelor curate, whose hard lines have fallen in a place five miles from the nearest educated being, feeling a little dull, being desirous of a visit from his friend from time to time, or taking his parson's holiday, of twenty days, once every summer. I take one myself yearly, with as much mental profit as pleasure, and return to my parish all the better fitted in health and spirit to renew my labours in that vineyard. In the front of this last June, I walked over the English and Scotch lake countries with Tom Trevor, attorney-at-law of Striketown. We were at dear old Trinity together in the old times, and understand one another perfectly. 'We have heard the chimes at midnight, have we not?' quotes he. 'Oh, the mad days we have spent, and to see how many of mine old acquaintance that are now clergymen!' I have no antecedents, I am thankful to say, to be very deeply ashamed of; and if I had, I should know that Tom could mean nothing but good-humour and pleasantry in reminding me of them. He is one of those rare ones who can say without offence anything, that from another man would be absolutely intolerable. That perpetual pyrotechnic display of his, no matter how inflammable the material on which it descends, never seems to set any one on fire. I don't know where he keeps his law-books, his business airs, his ill successes, his Christmas bills, and his indigestions, but none of his friends have ever seen a symptom of them: this of course weakens the vulgar belief in his solid virtues; and we who are pillars shake our heads a little, though we cannot refuse to offer cordial hands; while his defence is, that his principles, so far from not being high enough, are elevated clean out of sight.

He gives his brothers of his best;
His worst he keeps, his best he gives,

and I for one am not inclined to be hard upon him. He is, of course, one of the most charming 'tourist's companions' possible, and full of the happiest illustrations, lending an interest to the dullest landscapes, and heightening the glory of the grandest—'unto sorrow giving smiles, and unto graces, graces.' I remember him, while at college, discovering a pathos in a certain proposition in statics—whose object and meaning I have entirely forgotten, and which I shall most probably misquote—and throwing a touching regretfulness into his tones as he described how DE vanisheth, the weight is supported by the immovable fulcrum C, and the body is at rest! It is said to have drawn tears from an entire lecture-room.

'Now, Trevor,' said I, before we started upon our rambles, 'you have a genius for finance, I know, so you shall carry the bag for both of us; but remember I am but a poor curate, so don't be over-generous.'

'Reverend sir!' answered he, 'I am a lawyer, and such imputations I shake from off me as dew-drops are shaken from the calf-skin. Leave everything pecuniary to me.'

After this arrangement, I, of course, never interfered in such matters, nor was I ever present at any settling transactions whatsoever; and hence it was, as will be seen, that I came to make such an exceedingly cheap tour.

The landscape which lies round my curacy has none of these straggling objects about it, obstructing the light and air, which are called trees; but their place is supplied in some measure by gigantic chimneys, from the mouths of which rises an artificial sky, so dense that one wonders it doesn't rain down ink. And yet we have a sense of coming summer even there—a rustle of the leafy woodlands, a murmur of the pleasant brooks, make themselves heard amidst our very furnace roars; we feel that somewhere is the sun unblurred, the snow-white cloud set in the stainless blue; the green earth without touch of cinder-scar. We that have heard it, long then to hear the wind at its wild play among the hill-tops, as hungry men for food. The great town, whose iron clamour comes to us for ever across the level flats, in summer scarcely seems fit to breathe and move in. There are no fountains there, no parks, no gardens, no galleries of pictures, where a man may slake his thirst for freshness and for freedom; the workman there knows not so much of nature even as art, her pretty waiting-maid, can tell him: that is what dulls our pleasure—Tom's and mine—as we start from the hot clanging Striketown station for the purple hills. 'The pastor sees the dewy meadows, and the water-springs, but the flock never sees,' sighed I. 'Yes,' echoed Trevor; 'you the pastor, I the shearer, we alone.' A Striketown magnate in the same carriage—he was a corrugated iron-merchant, and he looked like it—took umbrage at our remarks upon this subject; but myself engaging him steadily hand to hand, while Tom dazzled him with his finest sheet-lightning, we reduced him to silence: presently, however, while we two were speaking of the best poetical expressions for distance, and one was instancing poor Keats's

There she stood,
About a young bird's flutter from the wood,

he broke in again with: 'And, gentlemen, pray how many yards may that be?' and so revenged himself.

Stafford, Preston, Lancaster, the abominable Crewe, were all left behind in due course, and we quitted the London and North-western for Westmoreland and fairyland at last. I confess myself to have been born a Cockney, and to entertain an admiration, not unmixed with awe, for the Surrey range. The great mountain mesh-work of the lake-country is to my eyes, therefore, quite as tremendous as the Himalayas; and all the witty things that have been said against it and the lakes pass by me like the idle wind, that wakes a smile of pity upon the face of fair Windermere, but never stirs its depths. I know not how far the dim recollection of a wearisome journey, and the distinct remembrance of a most excellent dinner, may have contributed to bring it about, but as we lay in our boat beneath Belle Isle that evening, the careless splash of the oars alone breaking the silence which brooded over the serene hills and moonlit lake, I believe, with Trevor, that if you had put pen and ink within my grasp—and it were not for the rhymes—I could have gone nigh to have written a sonnet. I feel at this moment the fatal facility of the lake district for writing descriptions stealing over me at the mere reminiscence; I long to honey my page with such names as Ambleside and Elterwater, or to make it like a leaf out of some mountain peerage, with such titles as Helvellyn and Glaramara, but I forbear. Enough to say, that we made forced marches over the hills and far away to our great content; the knapsacks—which at first seemed to be endowed with life and a desire to go the other way—which lay between our astonished shoulders like two large live coals, and which rendered our conditions of equilibrium both novel and dangerous—at last becoming as natural to us as the hump to the camel. And ever, at the close of each day's toil, did the red wine flow from the hotel's best bin; nor at any time, when our four legs grew weary, did we hesitate to hire eight fresh ones to relieve them, till, for my part, I began to fear that we should scarcely reach the Land of Cakes at all, or if we did, that we should have no money left to buy any. That Tom did pay for things, and pay liberally, was evident enough, for I never saw landlords more obsequious, landladies more gracious, or the plurality of boots more perfectly satisfied. One day, when we were carring it, the driver, who was new to the lake-country, and desired to make a cicerone of himself for the benefit of future visitors, entreated us to point out to him the local habitations and the names of the great celebrities, which Trevor did at once, most cheerfully and with a vengeance. It seemed to our astonished Jehu that so many eminent persons were never before collected in so small a compass; in particular, a certain sequestered clergyman, preferring the delights of solitude among the hills to that of his collegiate halls during the long vacation, had an undreamt-of greatness thrust upon him. Many a time has he since been startled by a string of cars, filled with excursionists, pulling short up before his cottage door, while our apt friend, whip in hand, dilates aloud upon the glory of 'Mr A——, the Fellow of St Boniface, the accomplished coach, who knows more about the particle μὲν than any other man within the four seas: that's his bedroom, gentlemen and ladies, looking east.' Whose fame is much indebted to Tom Trevor. On account of this good turn being done him, the driver declined to take more than a shilling for charioteering us twelve miles; but of course Tom couldn't get rid of all our carmen for such a mere song as that; and how the purse held out, grew a still greater wonder to me, day by day.

In Caledonia, matters went on just as smoothly: we denied ourselves no dainty which loch or mountain afforded, while the wine of the country, by reason of its smoky character, was pronounced not good enough for our palates, and rejected for burgundy and claret. Still, while I was set wondering whether or not a clergyman of the Church of England could be imprisoned in a Tolbooth for a hotel bill, the adulation of us in no way decreased. Gillies ran bare-legged, as though with the fiery cross in hand, to do our behests; musicians, with instruments resembling the interiors of quadrupeds, performed the most excruciating coronachs at our departures, and what were meant for triumphant airs at our arrivals. The best bedrooms seemed to have been bespoken for us at every inn, and the seats that were most comfortable, or which commanded the most extensive views, to have been reserved for us in the coffee-rooms. I began to have a horrid suspicion that we were being taken for somebody else—ambassadors extraordinary, or the Brothers Rothschild in disguise. Trevor had some sketching-paper, and I a note-book, which I used pretty freely; but neither authors nor artists—I can answer for Striketown, at least—were wont to be held in such consideration in the south, as to induce a belief that our genius and talents were only receiving their natural tributes. Sometimes Tom wrote the day before to secure accommodation for us, and sometimes had an interview with the landlord as soon as we arrived; but in either case, our occupation of the premises seemed to be hailed as triumphant and honourable to an extreme degree. At one of the largest inns in the Western Highlands, I happened, in Trevor's absence, to receive the bill instead of him, and I remember thinking of sending it to the *Times* newspaper, to refute the calumnies that had been published about hotel charges, only Tom persuaded me not. This is the bill, which, for two persons, I surely was justified in thinking very moderate: Double-bedded room, 1s. 6d.; soup and fish-dinner (for two), 3s.; bottle of port (1834), 3s.; breakfast for two, with meat, 1s. 6d.: Total, 9s. *N. B.*—It is particularly requested that no gratuities may be given to the servants.

I was much astonished that none of our fellow-travellers by the coach that morning seemed to be satisfied with their bills, but accused the landlord most unmercifully of extortion and excess; and I agreed with Tom that it was a very remarkable exemplification of the proverbial nearness of the Scotch character.

We travelled so fast, that I had time enough to spare for a four days' run into Ireland, which I was over-persuaded to take by my companion.

The sister-isle received us with extended arms: if anything, the welcomes of the innkeepers appeared to be still warmer and more affectionate than elsewhere, and the settlement of their accounts a mere form, that we were at liberty to go through or not as we preferred. The landladies went so far, on more than one occasion, as to kiss Trevor, and to entitle me their jewel; the gossoons stood on their heads to do us honour; and the very beggars about the inn-yards regarded us with a solicitude that was the more remarkable by reason of the difference of our countries and religions.

Upon the nineteenth day, I returned like a punctual shepherd to my flock, and on our road, Tom Trevor, Esq., attorney-at-law, insisted upon my auditing the accounts of our expenses, which—particularly as he handed me a much larger balance than, under the circumstances, I should have thought possible—I was very unwilling to do. My share of the three weeks' tour, irrespective of coach, railway, and packet fares, was under a five-pound note.

'Well, my dear fellow,' said I, with that feeling of grateful admiration which a Briton rarely permits himself to entertain except towards a great financier, 'all I can say is, I can't imagine how you did it. I never lived better or at less cost in all my life, and I shall certainly go over the same ground next summer, and, as I most sincerely hope, with the same companion.'

There was a curious expression about Trevor's eye which made me unaccountably uneasy, as he replied with some dryness: 'Well, I think your reverence had better not do that for a few seasons.'

'Why? why not, Trevor?—for goodness' sake, tell me why not?' said I, getting alarmed.

'Oh, nothing; don't be afraid, my dear sir; trust me for keeping on the safe side of the law in these matters.'

'The law!' gasped I, looking at the figures just transferred to my note-book, and regretting, somehow, that they did not make up a larger sum; 'why, you don't mean to say you'——

'No, *I* did nothing,' interrupted Tom; 'it was all you, you and that note-book. The fact is, you made such copious remarks in it from the first hour we started, and at every place you came to, that I thought you were compiling a *Guide to the North;* and without asking you the question point-blank, which I considered would have been indelicate, I communicated my suspicions, sometimes in writing, sometimes verbally, to the innkeepers. "My friend," I said to them, "is desirous of every information about this spot, and particularly regarding your hotel charges: you must not speak to him as if you were aware of this, for he is pledged by the Messrs Gratesail, publishers, to secrecy and independence; but I am pleased with your house myself, and am willing, under the rose, to do you a good turn." Every time you put pen to paper in the coffee-room saved us half-a-crown apiece at least; there was quite a difficulty in some places in getting them to charge us anything at all; and I must say that, all along, you acted your part to perfection.'

'Acted my part! how dare you,' said I, in a towering passion, 'you base, horrid'——

'There now, you are going on to what is actionable,' interrupted Tom. 'You parsons never know when to stop, and you are, besides, the last people in the world to take a healthy and charitable view of things. This is how the matter stands: we have passed, by your own confession, a very sumptuous three weeks; we have given opportunities to a much maligned class of our fellow-countrymen to exhibit their reasonableness and civility; we have threatened a new unmitigated guide-book, which you have both the power and the will to withhold; and, finally, we have had, I must say, an exceedingly cheap tour!'

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

WE GET TO THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

STARTING with lofty notions of liberty and equality, the United States, as already noticed, have always, and now more than ever, been hampered with an institution at variance with public profession, and which —from a European point of view—is lowering in no small degree to national dignity. Seemingly ashamed of slavery as a too obvious fact, American writers hasten to assure us that it is a mere local usage depending on the municipal law of the states in which it happens to exist, and therefore in no way concerns the federal constitution. We are not going to plunge into a political dispute on this point. It is true that slavery derives its vitality from the laws of individual states, and if these laws were severally abrogated, the institution would be no more; but it is equally certain, that while these laws are in operation, the federal power is bound to give them international efficacy. The constitution imparts authority to slaveholders to pursue and seize their property, 'persons held to service,' anywhere within the boundaries of the Union —even where no slavery exists. Besides this old Fugitive Slave-law, lately strengthened by an act of congress, the constitution prescribes a method of making up a constituency to appoint members to the House of Representatives, by reckoning the ratio of free and bond persons. Doubtless, it is unfortunate that the constitution in any manner, however equivocal, recognised and gave force to the practice of holding slaves, and so took that mean stand in the matter of human equality which embarrasses American jurisprudence; but nothing, we think, is to be gained by shirking the fact, and taking a disingenuous view of the subject.

It has been mentioned that the purchase of Louisiana, in 1803, was a turning-point in the history of the Union. At this time, the institution was disappearing from the more northern Atlantic states; and by the celebrated ordinance of 1787, it was excluded from the large Indiana territory on the north-west, from which have been formed the prosperous free states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. It lingered still in New York and New Jersey, but southward from Pennsylvania, and westward as far as the banks of the Mississippi, it was as yet confined to the limits of the 'Old Dominion.' Kentucky was formed from a ceded portion of Virginia, Tennessee from North Carolina, and, in like manner, Alabama and Mississippi from portions of Georgia; but though adding to the number of states, and swelling the slaveholding interests in congress, these re-arrangements did not geographically extend the area of slavery.

The acquisition of the French province of Louisiana opened up a boundless prospect for slavery extension. For a number of years, the newly acquired tract of country remained a territory under federal authority. At length, in 1812, the lower part on the Gulf of Mexico was admitted as the state of Louisiana. The remainder of the purchase, stretching northwards on the west bank of the Mississippi, and embracing the rivers Arkansas and Missouri, was henceforth known as the Missouri Territory, over which settlers gradually spread themselves. In March 1818, a sufficient population being consolidated, petitions from the inhabitants were presented to congress, praying for the admission of Missouri as a state. Now began the first resolute struggle between slavery and freedom. It was the wish of the petitioners to have the state admitted on equal terms with the state of Louisiana, in which the inhabitants were guaranteed all the privileges, that of holding slaves among others, which they had enjoyed under the French rule. This was firmly opposed. A degree of alarm concerning the spread of slavery had taken possession of legislators from the free states; and it was felt that now or never was the opportunity for checking its wonderful and unexpected growth in the far west. It must be allowed, that members of congress had been much too late in making this notable discovery—the whole nation, indeed, had been culpably negligent on the subject. If there was a general desire to admit no more states with slavery, the proper precaution would have consisted in enacting a law, like that of the ordinance of 1787, for ever excluding the institution from the territories out of which such states could possibly be formed. The defects of the federal constitution seemed to necessitate such a legislative measure.

It has been graphically said, that when a number of adventurers, British subjects, land on a newly discovered territory, and take possession in the name of the Queen, the common law of England, is *ipso facto* established; and from that moment every member of the infant community, no matter what be his breed or colour, enjoys all the privileges, and comes under the usual obligations of freeborn Englishmen. In such a way does the British constitution act, and there is a decision and simplicity about it which cannot but command respect. The constitution of the United States is less comprehensive and peremptory. Plant it where you will, it settles no determinate social system. It proclaims freedom, but admits of slavery. All men are free, but freemen may hold slaves—'chattels human'—who though men *de facto*, are seemingly not men *de jure*. The British flag, God knows, has in its day sheltered much insolence, injustice, cruelty. Under it, eighty years ago, an audacious attempt—since regretted and atoned for—was made to rob English colonists of their inherent rights, and what the end of that was, we all know. Things are somewhat altered since Grenville passed the Stamp Act, or since good old Dr Johnson wrote *Taxation no Tyranny*. When we see the Union Jack floating from a vessel in the Atlantic, we feel a sound assurance that there is not the vestige of a slave on board. A sight of the American flag does not convey the same confidence; seen south from the capes of Virginia, two to one it is covering a cargo of slaves on the way to the market for 'chattels human' at New Orleans; for though the foreign slave-trade terminated in 1808, the coasting slave-trade did not, and is till this day in full operation. If this be thought a hard view of practices prevailing under the federal constitution, we cannot help it. The constitution is not that of a distinct nation, but simply the terms of compact by which a number of sovereignties—at present thirty-one—agree to hold together for the sake of mutual convenience and purposes common to the whole. Some of these sovereignties exclude slavery, some maintain it. The federal constitution, consequently, operates with considerable reserve on this delicate subject. It is anything you like to make of it. When extended over new territories, unless congress interpose an order to the contrary, the choice of domestic institutions is nominally left to the parties concerned. If, when the time comes, they choose to inaugurate slavery, good and well; it is all the same to the constitution. This is called 'freedom.' So much for theory. Let us now see how the thing practically works.

When a new tract of country is acquired by the United States, it passes into the possession and under the control of the federal authorities, who hold it for the general behoof. If it be resolved to lay it out for a new state, it is first created a 'territory.' As such, it is the subject of an act of congress, from which body it receives an interim constitution, prescribing its boundaries, divisions, executive authorities, laws, judicial and political system. With a governor appointed by the president, it remains under federal tutelage, till on petition of its inhabitants it is admitted into the brotherhood of states. All this seems reasonable, and, in its general features, the practice affords a fine instance of that self-creative political organisation for which the Americans are celebrated. Analysing the acts of congress and presidents, we observe something less favourable. The federal constitution is silent about race or colour; but in interpreting it, American lawgivers arrive at the conclusion, that the United States are the property of whites, and that persons with a tinge of dark colour in their countenance, though born free, are not citizens. Within the last two months, this view of citizenship has been enforced by a high federal officer, one of the secretaries of state, who refused passports to some coloured free persons, on the ground that they 'were not citizens within the meaning of the constitution.' This may be a right or a wrong interpretation of the fundamental charter of the Union: it is, at all events, acted on without apparently exciting public challenge. Accordingly, in passing an act to organise a territory—as, for example, that of 1855, constituting the territories of Nebraska and Kansas—there is the following regulation in regard to voters: 'Every free white male inhabitant, twenty-one years old, an actual resident in the territory at the time of the passage of this act, and with the qualifications after described, may vote,' &c. Thus, at the very outset, a disqualification is imposed on free coloured persons, without the slightest regard to their means or their ability; and from this to 'holding persons to service,' is an easy transition. Such, however, are the prejudices against colour in the United States, that the most ardent lovers of freedom in Kansas, while suffering from pro-slavery aggression, never proposed to give the franchise to any but whites.

The federal constitution being indifferent to the spread or limitation of slavery, the will of congress and president for the time being is a kind of supplemental constitution, whence the internal policy of a new territory is moulded. Much usually depends on the political leanings of the president, who, being irremovable for four years, and armed with an enormous power of appointment to office, may be said to exercise a control more resembling that of a despot than a constitutional sovereign. The presidents of past times have, for the most part, had strong pro-slavery convictions, and thrown the balance of authority in that direction. Still affecting to allow fair play in the scramble between slavery and anti-slavery principles in the inchoate states, they would rather seem to have aided in imparting to them pro-slavery constitutions. Mr Pierce, the present president, thinks that if things are left to take their course in a territory, slavery, from its intrinsic qualities, will outstrip freedom. In his late message to congress, he says: 'It is the fact that in all the unsettled regions of the United States, if emigration be left free to act in this respect for itself, without legal prohibitions on either side, slave labour will spontaneously go everywhere in preference to free labour. Is it the fact that the peculiar domestic institutions of the southern states possess relatively so much of vigour, that wheresoever an avenue is freely open to all the world, they will penetrate, to the exclusion of those of the northern states?' Leaving the North to answer Mr Pierce's question, it is enough for us to know that the pretended freedom communicated by congress and the constitution, produces an unseemly fracas in territorial organisation; so that ever and anon a battle is raging somewhere in the south or west. The act being passed which throws open the territory for settlement, a rush ensues from all points in the Union. Lawyers, schoolmasters, printers, and preachers from Massachusetts; farmers from Vermont and New Hampshire; mechanics and pedlers from Connecticut; storekeepers from Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and New York; planters with bands of 'servants' from Alabama and Kentucky; and loafers, rowdies, and ragamuffins from everywhere, are hastening on by steam-boat, railway, wagon, horseback, wheel-barrow, and on foot to the land of promise—struggling, pushing, driving, drinking, swearing, cheating, and it may be, fighting. The rule, if there be a rule, is every man for himself. The great thing is, who shall get the earliest clutch at the best localities; and not much ceremony is used in squatting and taking possession. In no time, a capital city is planted, hotels struck up, a state-house inaugurated, newspapers set agoing, and voting for territorial, civic, and judicial officers is in 'full blast.' In one sense, there is something grand in this restless onflow of Anglo-Americans over the domains of unreclaimed nature. We are carried in imagination back to that most ancient of injunctions, 'to go forth to replenish the earth, and subdue it.' To be sure, the thing is done coarsely—very. But it is done somehow; and from the chaos of a first settlement, spring in due time order and civilisation. What we have occasion to deplore is, the totally unnecessary and undesirable scramble for slavery or freedom in the new settlements. We need hardly say that, according to all accounts, the slave-holding interests take care to assume such a dictatorial attitude in these freshly opened lands, that under favour of the federal executive, they are able to overawe opposition, and to prefer claims to congress for a pro-slavery constitution, which cannot well be withstood. That congress should all the while complacently stand aside, on the presumption that a free choice is to be made, and at last legislate on this understanding, seems only to be a method of wilfully extending slavery to the further limits of the Union. Of course, should congress attempt to legislate prospectively in favour of freedom, it will have imputed to it that it is unconstitutionally taking a side—doing what it has no business to do; acting as umpire between free and slave states. We have the best evidence, however, that congress does possess authority to exclude slavery from the territories. Jefferson's ordinance of 1787, excluding it from the north-west territory, was an enactment of the last continental congress, which has been repeatedly recognised and sanctioned by the federal congress. It is evident, therefore, that until a new and more comprehensive federal constitution is adopted—if ever that will be—the proper course of policy is for congress to pass a general enactment, for ever excluding slavery from all the territories of the United States. Mr Buchanan, we believe, maintains the doctrine, that the constitution limits the power of congress in this respect; while, on the contrary, his late opponent, Colonel Fremont, holds to the opinion that congress is constitutionally entitled 'to prohibit in the territories those twin-relics of barbarism—polygamy and slavery.' Moderate men of all parties, we should think, would wish to see congress resolutely embrace this latter opinion; but in order to do so with any chance of success, northern men would require to abandon that singularly temporising policy—that anomalous subserviency to southern interests—for which they have earned an unenviable reputation. It is notorious, that with all the prevalent alarm respecting the increasing power of slaveholders, and all the professions in favour of freedom, the North expresses no desire to do more than seclude slavery within a certain geographical limit. That this has generally been the hapless policy of the free portion of the Union, is conspicuous in the history of the Missouri Compromise and subsequent events.

We now approach this famed compromise. In February 1819, the petition of the inhabitants of Missouri for the admission of their state, which had been some time under consideration, led to a hot debate in congress. In the House of Representatives, Mr Tallmadge of New York moved the following amendment on the proposed constitution: 'And provided that the introduction of slavery, or involuntary servitude, be prohibited, except for the punishment of crimes, whereof the party has been duly convicted, and that all children born within the said state, after the admission thereof into the Union, shall be declared free at the age of twenty-five years.' To this restriction, southern members objected, for the reason that congress had no right to impose such offensive terms. Missouri was entitled, like every other state, to choose its own institutions, so far as slavery was concerned. Threats were thrown out, that if the restriction were carried, the South would dissolve its connection with the Union. Tallmadge, who appears to have been a man of dauntless energy, referred to this new outcry: 'If a dissolution of the Union must take place, let it be so. If civil war, which gentlemen so much threaten, must come, I can only say, let it come. My hold on life is probably as frail as that of any man who now hears me; but while that hold lasts, it shall be devoted to the service of my country—to the freedom of man. If blood is necessary to extinguish any fire which I have assisted to kindle, I can assure gentlemen, while I regret the necessity, I shall not forbear to contribute my mite. Sir, the violence to which gentlemen have resorted on this subject will not move my purpose, nor drive me from my place. I have the fortune and the honour to stand here as the representative of freemen, who possess intelligence to know their rights—who have the spirit to maintain them. As their representative, I will proclaim their hatred to slavery in every shape—as their representative, here will I hold my stand, till this floor, with the constitution of my country which supports it, shall sink beneath me—if I am doomed to fall, I shall at least have the painful consolation to believe that I fall as a fragment in the ruins of my country.' Referring to menaces of violence, he continued: 'Has it already come to this: that in the congress of the United States—that in the legislative councils of republican America, the subject of slavery has become a subject of so much feeling—of such delicacy—of such danger, that it cannot be safely discussed! Are we to be told of the dissolution of the Union, of civil war, and of seas of blood? And yet, with such awful threatenings before us, do gentlemen in the same breath insist upon the encouragement of this evil; upon the extension of this monstrous scourge of the human race? An evil so fraught with such dire calamities to us as individuals, and to our nation, and threatening in its progress to overwhelm the civil and religious institutions of the country, with the liberties of the nation, ought at once to be met, and to be controlled. If its power, its influence, and its impending dangers, have already arrived at such a point that it is not safe to discuss it on this floor, and it cannot now pass under consideration as a proper subject for general legislation, what will be the result when it is spread through your widely extended domain? Its present threatening aspect, and the violence of its supporters, so far from inducing me to yield to its progress, prompt me to resist its march. Now is the time. It must now be met, and the extension of the evil must now be prevented, or the occasion is irrecoverably lost, and the evil can never be controlled.' Next, alluding to the extension of empire over the vast territories of the west, he says: 'People this fair domain with the slaves of your planters; extend *slavery*, this bane of man, this abomination of Heaven, over your extended empire, and you prepare its dissolution; you turn its accumulated strength into positive weakness; you cherish a canker in your breast; you put poison in your bosom; you place a vulture preying on your heart—nay, you whet the dagger and place it in the hands of a portion of your population, stimulated to use it by every tie, human and divine. The envious contrast between your happiness and their misery, between your liberty and their slavery, must constantly prompt them to accomplish your destruction. Your enemies will learn the source and the cause of your weakness. As often as external dangers shall threaten, or internal commotions await you, you will then realise that, by your own procurement, you have placed amidst your families, and in the bosom of your country, a population producing at once the greatest cause of individual danger and of national weakness. With this defect, your government must crumble to pieces, and your people become the scoff of the world.'

Finally, the bill embodying the restriction was lost. The men of the north, we have said, strangely content themselves with seeing slavery fortify and extend itself, provided it keep within a certain limit. The required line of division appears to be that which bounds the cotton-producing lands of the south. Having lost Missouri territory, as a whole, the friends of freedom did not prevent the southern portion of it being organised as a territory, without any restriction as to slavery. This was accordingly done. Arkansas was set off as a distinct territory; and the usual means being employed to give it pro-slavery tendencies, it became ultimately (1836) a slave state.

The struggle about Missouri was renewed in December 1819 and January 1820. As there seemed no possibility of reconciling both branches of congress to a plan of restriction within Missouri, the idea of a compromise was suggested. It was proposed by Mr Thomas of Illinois to admit Missouri as a slave state; but, as a compensation, to exclude it prospectively from all the remainder of the old Louisianan territory, north of a certain latitude. His provision was—'And be it further enacted, That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States under the name of Louisiana which lies north of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes, north latitude, excepting only such part thereof as is included within the limits of the state contemplated by this act, slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall be, and is hereby for ever prohibited.' This compromise, after various divisions in both houses, was adopted. Missouri was enabled to enter the Union as a slave state. There was yet, however, another struggle connected with this troublesome matter. When the Missourians, in November 1820, submitted their state constitution to the approval of congress, it was found to contain some objectionable clauses, preventing the settlement of free men of colour in the state. As several northern states acknowledge free coloured men to be citizens, though the federal constitution, as usually interpreted, is much more exclusive, the objectionable clauses met with a warm opposition. At this juncture, a new character comes on the stage. Throughout the whole Missouri affair, Henry Clay, a statesman of no mean eminence, had given the aid of his counsels. If every man has his mission, Clay's seems to have been that of inventing compromises. He was an orator, a schemer—one of those mighty geniuses who have always a plan in their pocket to tide over difficulties, and who, in securing present peace, do not mind sowing the seeds of future discord. Clay's plan of engineering a difficulty was sublimely simple. It consisted in compounding for so much evil by so much good. If a certain quantity of slavery was put in one scale, the same quantity of freedom, *or what looked like freedom*, was put in the other; so the balance was adjusted, and all parties satisfied. He is understood to have been the real concocter of the Missouri Compromise; and now, at this fresh and unexpected collision, he interposed with a scheme of settlement. It consisted in exacting a pledge from the Missouri legislature, that no advantage should be taken of its constitution, and it should pass no act 'to exclude any of the citizens of either of the states' from the enjoyment of the privileges they enjoy under the constitution of the United States. This qualifying provision was accepted. The only question is—who are 'citizens within the meaning of the constitution?' So ended the contests about Missouri, which was received into the Union as a full-blown slave state—a circumstance ever to be regretted, for, independently of other considerations, the state, as will be seen on looking at a map, projects considerably northwards into free territory, and so stops the way to free migration westwards.

W. C.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VIII.—DON RAMON.

On entering the courtyard, a somewhat novel scene presented itself—a Spanish picture, with some transatlantic touches. The *patio* of a Mexican house is its proper front. Here you no longer look upon jail-like door and windows, but façades gaily frescoed, curtained verandahs, and glazed sashes that reach to the ground. The patio of Don Ramon's mansion was paved with brick. A fountain, with its tank of japanned mason-work, stood in the centre; orange-trees stretched their fronds over the water: their golden globes and white wax-like flowers perfumed the atmosphere, which, cooled by the constant evaporation of the *jet d'eau*, felt fresh and fragrant. Round three sides of the court extended a verandah, its floor of painted tiles rising but a few inches above the level of the paved court. A row of *portales* supported the roof of this verandah, and the whole corridor was railed in, and curtained. The curtains were close-drawn, and except at one point—the entrance between two of the portales—the corridor was completely screened from our view, and consequently all the windows of the house, which opened into the verandah. No human face greeted our searching glances. In looking to the rear, into the great *corral*, or cattle-yard, we could see numerous peons in their brown leathern dresses, with naked legs and sandalled feet; vaqueros in all their grandeur of velveteens, bell-buttons, and gold or silver lace; with a number of women and young girls in coloured *naguas* and rebosos. A busy scene was presented in that quarter. It was the great cattle enclosure, for the estate of Don Ramon de Vargas was a *hacienda de ganados*, or grand cattle-farm—a title which in no way detracts from the presumed respectability of its owner, many of the noble hidalgos of Mexico being only *graziers* on a large scale.

On entering the patio, I only glanced back at the corral; my eyes were busy with the curtained verandah, and, failing there, were carried up to the azotea, in hopes of discovering the object of my thoughts. The house, as I have elsewhere stated, was but a single story in height, and from the saddle, I could almost look into the azotea. I could see that it was a sanctuary of rare plants, and the broad leaves and bright corollas of some of the taller ones appeared over the edge of the parapet. Abundance of fair flowers I could perceive, but not that for which I was looking. No face yet shewed, no voice greeted us with a welcome. The shouts of the vaqueros, the music of singing-birds caged along the corridor, and the murmur of the fountain, were the only sounds. The two former suddenly became hushed, as the hoofs of our horses rang upon the stone pavement, and the heedless water alone continued to utter its soft monotone. Once more my eyes swept the curtain, gazing intently into the few apertures left by a careless drawing; once more they sought the azotea, and glanced along the parapet: my scrutiny still remained unrewarded.

Without exchanging a word, Wheatley and I sat silent in our saddles, awaiting the return of the portero. Already the peons, vaqueros, and wenches had poured in through the back gateway, and stood staring with astonishment at the unexpected guests. After a considerable pause, the tread of feet was heard upon the corridor, and presently the messenger appeared, and announced that the *dueño* was coming. In a minute after, one of the curtains was drawn back, and an old gentleman made his appearance behind the railing. He was a person of large frame, and although slightly stooping with age, his step was firm, and his whole aspect bespoke a wonderful energy and resolution. His eyes were large and brilliant, shadowed by heavy brows, upon which the hair still retained its dark colour, although that of his head was white as snow. He was simply habited—in a jacket of nankeen cloth, and wide trousers of like material. He wore neither waistcoat nor cravat. A full white shirt of finest linen covered his breast, and a sash of dull blue colour was twisted round his waist. On his head was a costly hat of the 'Guayaquil grass,' and in his fingers a husk cigarrito smoking at the end.

Altogether, the aspect of Don Ramon—for it was he—despite its assumed sternness, was pleasing and intelligent; and I should have relished a friendly chat with him, even upon his own account.

This, however, was out of the question. I must abide by the spirit of my orders: the farce must be played out; so, touching the flanks of my horse, I rode forward to the edge of the verandah, and placed myself *vis-à-vis* to the Don.

'Are you Don Ramon de Vargas?'

'Si, señor,' was the reply, in a tone of angry astonishment.

'I am an officer of the American army'—I spoke loud, and in Spanish of course, for the benefit of the peons and vaqueros. 'I am sent to offer you a contract to supply the army with beeves. I have here an order from the general-in-chief'——

'I have no beeves for sale,' interrupted Don Ramon in a loud indignant voice; 'I shall have nothing to do with the American army.'

'Then, sir,' retorted I, 'I must take your beeves without your consent. You will be paid for them, but take them I must; my orders require that I should do so. Moreover, your vaqueros must accompany us, and drive the cattle to the American camp.'

As I said this, I signalled to Holingsworth, who rode in with his following; and then the whole troop, filing through the back gateway, began to collect the frightened vaqueros, and set them about their work.

'I protest against this robbery!' shouted Don Ramon. 'It is infamous—contrary to the laws of civilised warfare. I shall appeal to my government—to yours—I shall have redress.'

'You shall have payment, Don Ramon,' said I, apparently trying to pacify him.

'Payment, *carrambo!*—payment from robbers, *filibusteros*'——

'Come, come, old gentleman!' cried Wheatley, who was only half behind the scenes, and who spoke rather in earnest, 'keep a good tongue in your head, or you may lose something of more value to you than your cattle. Remember whom you are talking to.'

'*Tejanos! ladrones!*' hissed Don Ramon, with an earnest application of the latter phrase that would certainly have brought Wheatley's revolver from his belt, had I not, at the moment, whispered a word in the lieutenant's ear.

'Hang the old rascal!' muttered he in reply to me; 'I thought he *was* in earnest. Look here, old fellow!' he continued, addressing himself to Don Ramon, 'don't you be scared about the dollars. Uncle Sam's a liberal trader and a good paymaster. I wish your beef was mine, and I had *his* promise to pay for it. So take things a little easier, if you please; and don't be so free of your "filibusteros" and "ladrones:" free-born Texans ain't used to such talk.'

Don Ramon suddenly cut short the colloquy by angrily closing the curtains, and hiding himself from our sight.

During the whole scene, I had great difficulty in controlling my countenance. I could perceive that the Mexican laboured under a similar difficulty. There was a laughing devil in the corner of his keen eye that required restraint; and I thought once or twice either he or I should lose our equanimity. *I* certainly should have done so, but that my heart and eyes were most of the time in other quarters. As for the Don, he was playing an important part; and a suspicion of his hypocrisy, on the minds of some of the leathern-clad *greasers* who listened to the dialogue, might have afterwards brought him to trouble. Most of them were his own domestics and retainers, but not all. There were free *rancheros* among them—some who belonged to the pueblita itself—some, perchance, who had figured in *pronunciamentos*—who voted at elections, and called themselves *citizens*. The Don, therefore, had good reasons for assuming a character; and well did the old gentleman sustain it.

As he drew the curtain, his half-whispered 'Adios, capitan!' heard only by myself, sounded full of sweetness and *promise;* and I felt rather contented as I straightened myself in the saddle, and issued the order for *rieving* his cattle.

CHAPTER IX.

'UN PAPELCITO.'

Wheatley now rode after the troop, which with Holingsworth had already entered the corral. A band of drivers was speedily pressed into service; and with these the two lieutenants proceeded to the great plain at the foot of the hill, where most of Don Ramon's cattle were at pasture. By this arrangement I was left alone, if I except the company of half-a-dozen slippered wenches, the deities of the *cocina*, who, clustered in the corner of the patio, eyed me with mingled looks of curiosity and fear. The verandah curtains remained hermetically closed, and though I glanced at every aperture that offered a chance to an observing eye, no one appeared to be stirring behind them.

'Too high-bred—perhaps indifferent?' thought I. The latter supposition was by no means gratifying to my vanity. 'After all, now that the others are gone out of the way, Don Ramon *might* ask me to step inside. Ah! no—these mestizo women would tell tales: I perceive it would never do. I may as well give it up. I shall ride out, and join the troop.'

As I turned my horse to put this design into execution, the fountain came under my eyes. Its water reminded me that I was thirsty, for it was a July day, and a hot one. A gourd cup lay on the edge of the tank. Without dismounting, I was able to lay hold of the vessel, and filling it with the cool sparkling liquid, I drained it off. It was very good water, but not Canario or Xeres.

Sweeping the curtain once more, I turned with a disappointed glance, and jagging my horse, rode doggedly out through the back gateway. Once in the rear of the buildings, I had a full view of the great meadow already known to me; and pulling up, I sat in the saddle, and watched the animated scene that was there being enacted. Bulls, half wild, rushing to and fro in mad fury; vaqueros mounted on their light mustangs, with streaming sash and winding lazo; rangers upon their heavier steeds, offering but a clumsy aid to the more adroit and practised herdsmen; others driving off large groups that had been already collected and brought into subjection: and all this amidst the fierce bellowing of the bulls, the shouts and laughter of the delighted troopers, the shriller cries of the vaqueros and peons. The whole formed a picture that, under other circumstances, I should have contemplated with interest. Just then, my spirits were not attuned to its enjoyment, and although I remained for some minutes with my eyes fixed upon it, my thoughts wandered elsewhere.

I confess to a strong faith in woman's curiosity. That such a scene could be passing under the windows of the most aristocratic mansion, without its most aristocratic inmate deigning to take a peep at it, I could not believe. Besides, Isolina was the very reverse. 'Ha! Despite that jealous curtain, those beautiful eyes are glancing through some aperture—window or loophole, I doubt not;' and with this reflection, I once more turned my face to the buildings.

Just then, it occurred to me that I had not sufficiently reconnoitred the *front* of the dwelling. As we approached it, we had observed that the shutters of the windows were closed; but these opened inward, and since that time one or other of them might have been set a little ajar. From my knowledge of Mexican interiors, I knew that these front windows were those of the principal apartments—of the *sala* and grand *cuarto*, or drawing-room—precisely those where the inmates at that hour should be found.

'Fool!' thought I, 'to have remained so long in the patio. Had I gone round to the front windows, I might have—— 'Tis not too late—there's a chance yet.'

Under the impulse of this new hope, I rode back through the corral, and re-entered the patio. The brown-skinned mestizas were still there, chattering and flurried as ever, and the curtain had not been stirred. A glance at it was all I gave; and without stopping, I walked my horse across the paved court, and entered under the arched *saguan*. The massive gate stood open, as we had left it; and on looking into the little box of the portero, I perceived that it was empty. The man had hid himself, in dread of a second interview with the Texan lieutenant!

In another moment, I had emerged from the gateway, and was about turning my horse to inspect the windows, when I heard the word 'Capitan,' pronounced in a voice that sounded soft as a silver bell, and thrilled to my heart like a strain of music.

I looked towards the windows. It came not thence; they were close shut as ever. Whence—— Before I had time to ask myself the question, the 'Capitan' was repeated in a somewhat louder key, and I now perceived that the voice proceeded from above—from the azotea.

I wrenched my horse round, at the same time turning my eyes upward. I could see no one; but just at that moment an arm, that might have been attached to the bust of Venus, was protruded through a notch in the parapet. In the small hand, wickedly sparkling with jewels, was something white, which I could not distinguish until I saw it projected on the grass—at the same moment that the phrase 'Un papelcito' reached my ears.

Without hesitation I dismounted—made myself master of the *papelcito;* and then leaping once more into the saddle, looked upward. I had purposely drawn my horse some distance from the walls, so that I might command a better view. I was not disappointed—Isolina! The face, that lovely face, was just distinguishable through the slender embrasure, the large brown eyes gazing upon me with that half-earnest, half-mocking glance I had already noticed, and which produced within me both pleasure and pain!

I was about to speak to her, when I saw the expression suddenly change: a hurried glance was thrown backwards, as if the approach of some one disturbed her; a finger rested momentarily on her lips, and then her face disappeared behind the screening wall of the parapet. I understood the universal sign, and remained silent.

For some moments I was undecided whether to go or stay. She had evidently withdrawn from the front of the building, though she was still upon the azotea. Some one had joined her; and I could hear voices in conversation; her own contrasting with the harsher tones of a man. Perhaps her father—perhaps—that other *relative*—less agreeable supposition!

I was about to ride off, when it occurred to me that I had better first master the contents of the 'papelcito.' Perhaps it might throw some light on the situation, and enable me to adopt the more pleasant alternative of remaining a while longer upon the premises. I had thrust the *billet* into the breast of my frock; and now looked around for some place, where I might draw it forth and peruse it unobserved. The great arched gateway, shadowy and tenantless, offered the desired accommodation; and heading my horse to it, I once more rode inside the saguan. Facing around so as to hide my front from the *cocineras*, I drew forth the strip of folded paper, and spread it open before me. Though written in pencil, and evidently in a hurried impromptu, I had no difficulty in deciphering it. My heart throbbed exultingly as I read:

'Capitan! I know you will pardon our dry hospitality? A cup of cold water—ha! ha! ha! Remember what I told you yesterday: we fear our *friends* more than our *foes*, and we have a *guest in the house my father dreads more than you and your terrible filibusteros.* I am not angry with you for my pet, but you have carried off my lazo as well. Ah, capitan! would you rob me of *everything?*—Adios! ISOLINA.'

Thrusting the paper back into my bosom, I sat for some time pondering upon its contents. Part was clear enough—the remaining part full of mystery.

'We fear our *friends* more than our *foes*.' I was behind the scenes sufficiently to comprehend what was intended by that cunningly worded phrase. It simply meant that Don Ramon de Vargas was *Ayankieado*—in other words, a friend to the American cause, or, as some loud demagogues would have pronounced him, a 'traitor to his country.' It did not follow, however, that he was anything of the kind. He might have wished success to the American arms, and still remained a true friend to his country—not one of those blind bigots whose standard displays the brigand motto, 'Our country right or wrong,' but an enlightened patriot, who desired more to see Mexico enjoy peace and happiness under foreign domination, than that it should continue in anarchy under the iron rule of native despots. What is there in the empty title of *independence*, without peace, without liberty? After all, patriotism in its ordinary sense is but a doubtful virtue—perhaps nearer to a crime! It will one day appear so; one day in the far future it will be supplanted by a virtue of higher order—the patriotism that knows no boundaries of nations, but whose *country* is the whole earth. That, however, would *not* be 'patriotism!'

Was Don Ramon de Vargas a patriot in this sense—a man of progress, who cared not that the *name* of 'Mexico' should be blotted from the map, so long as peace and prosperity should be given to his country under another name? Was Don Ramon one of these? It might be. There were many such in Mexico at that time, and these principally of the class to which Señor de Vargas belonged—the *ricos*, or proprietors. It is easy enough to explain why the Ayankieados were of the class of ricos.

Perhaps the affection of Don Ramon for the American cause had less lofty motives; perhaps the 5000 beeves may have had something to do with it? Whether or no, I could not tell; nor did I stay to consider. I only reflected upon the matter at all as offering an explanation to the ambiguous phrase now twice used by his fair daughter—'We fear our *friends* more than our *foes.*' On either supposition, the meaning was clear.

What followed was far from equally perspicuous. *A guest in the house dreaded by her father!* Here was mystery indeed. Who could that guest be?—who but *Ijurra?*

But Ijurra was her cousin—she had said so. If a cousin, why should he be dreaded? Was there still another guest in the house? That might be: I had not been inside to see. The mansion was large enough to accommodate another—half a score of others. For all that, my thoughts constantly turned upon Ijurra, and why I know not; but I could not resist the belief that he was the person pointed at—the guest that was 'dreaded!'

The behaviour which I had noticed on the day before—the first and only time I had ever seen the man—his angry speech and looks addressed to Isolina—her apparent fear of him: these it was, no doubt, that guided my instincts; and I at length came to the conviction that he was the fiend dreaded by Don Ramon. And she too feared him! 'God grant that she do not also *love* him!'

Such was my mental ejaculation, as I passed on to consider the closing sentences of the hastily written note. In these I also encountered ambiguity of expression; whether I construed it aright, time would tell. Perhaps my wish was too much parent to my thoughts; but it was with exulting heart I rode out from the gateway.

CHAPTER X.

AN OLD ENMITY.

I rode slowly, and but a few paces before reining up my horse. Although I was under the impression that it would be useless remaining, and that an interview with Isolina was impossible, for that day at least, I could not divest myself of the desire to linger a little longer near the spot. Perhaps she might appear again upon the azotea; if but for a moment; if but to wave her hand, and waft me an adieu; if but——

When a short distance separated me from the walls, I drew up, and turning in the saddle, glanced back to the parapet. A face was there, where hers had been; but, oh, the contrast between her lovely features and those that now met my gaze! Hyperion to the Satyr! Not that the face now before me was ugly or ill featured. There are some, and women too, who would have termed it handsome: to my eyes, it was hideous! Let me confess that this hideousness, or more properly its cause, rested in the moral, rather than the physical expression; perhaps, too, a little of it might have been found in my own heart. Under other circumstances, I might not have criticised that face so harshly. All the world did not think as I about the face of Rafael Ijurra—for it was he who was gazing at me over the parapet.

Our eyes met; and that first glance stamped the relationship between us—hostility for life! Not a word passed, and yet the looks of each told the other, in the plainest language, '*I am your foe.*' Had we sworn it in wild oaths, in all the bitter hyperbole of insult, neither of us would have felt it more profound and keen.

I shall not stay to analyse this feeling of sudden and unexpressed hostility, though the philosophy of it is simple enough. You too have experienced it—perhaps more than once in your life, without being exactly able to explain it. I am not in that dilemma: I could explain it easily enough; but it scarcely merits an explanation. Suffice to say, that while gazing upon the face of that man, I entertained it in all its strength.

I have called it an *unexpressed* hostility. Therein I have spoken without thought; it was fully expressed by both of us, though not in words. Words are but weak symbols of a passion, compared with the passion itself, exhibited in the clenched hand, the lip compressed, the flashing eye, the clouded cheek, the quick play of the muscles—weak symbols are words compared with signs like these. No words passed between Ijurra and myself; none were needed. Each read in the other a rival—a rival in love, a competitor for the heart of a lovely woman, the *loveliest* in Mexico! It is needless to say that, under such an aspect, each hated the other at sight.

In the face of Ijurra I read more. I saw before me a man of bad heart and brutal nature. His large, and, to speak the truth, beautiful eyes, had in them an animal expression. They were not without intelligence, but so much the worse, for that intelligence expressed ferocity and bad faith. His beauty was the beauty of the jaguar. He had the air of an accomplished man, accustomed to conquest in the field of love—heartless, reckless, false. O mystery of our nature, there are those who love such men!

In Ijurra's face I read more: *he knew my secret!* The significant glance of his eye told me so. He knew why I was lingering there. The satiric smile upon his lip attested it. He saw my efforts to obtain an interview, and, confident in his own position, held my failure but lightly—a something only to amuse him. I could tell all this by the sardonic sneer that sat upon his features.

As we continued to gaze, neither moving his eyes from the other, this sneer became too oppressive to be silently borne. I could no longer stand such a satirical reading of my thoughts. The insult was as marked as words could have made it; and I was about to have recourse to words to reply, when the clatter of a horse's hoofs caused me to turn my eyes in an opposite direction. A horseman was coming up the hill, in a direct line from the pastures. I saw it was one of the lieutenants—Holingsworth.

A few more stretches of his horse brought the lieutenant upon the ground, where he pulled up directly in front of me.

'Captain Warfield!' said he, speaking in an official tone, 'the cattle are collected; shall we proceed'——

He proceeded no further with that sentence; his eye, chance directed, was carried up to the azotea, and rested upon the face of Ijurra. He started in his saddle, as if a serpent had stung him; his hollow eyes shot prominently out, glaring wildly from their sockets, while the muscles of his throat and jaws twitched in convulsive action! For a moment, the desperate passion seemed to stifle his breathing, and while thus silent, the expression of his eyes puzzled me. It was of frantic joy, and ill became that face where I had never observed a smile. But the strange look was soon explained—it was not friendship, but the joy of anticipated vengeance! Breaking into a wild laugh, he shrieked out: 'Rafael Ijurra, by the eternal God!'

This awful and emphatic recognition produced its effect. I saw that Ijurra knew the man who addressed him. His dark countenance turned suddenly pale, and then became mottled with livid spots, while his eyes scintillated and rolled about in the unsteady glances of terror. He made no reply beyond the ejaculation 'Demonio!' which seemed involuntarily to escape him. He appeared unable to reply; surprise and fright held him spell-bound and speechless!

'Traitor! villain! murderer!' shrieked Holingsworth, 'we've met at last; now for a squaring of our accounts!' and in the next instant the muzzle of his rifle was pointing to the notch in the parapet—pointing to the face of Ijurra!

'Hold, Holingsworth!—hold!' cried I, pressing my heel deeply into my horse's flanks, and dashing forward.

Though my steed sprang instantly to the spur, and as quickly I caught the lieutenant's arm, I was too late to arrest the shot. I spoiled his aim, however; and the bullet, instead of passing through the brain of Rafael Ijurra, as it would certainly have done, glanced upon the mortar of the parapet, sending a cloud of lime-dust into his face.

Up to that moment, the Mexican had made no attempt to escape beyond the aim of his antagonist. Terror must have glued him to the spot. It was only when the report of the rifle, and the blinding mortar broke the spell, that he was able to turn and fly. When the dust cleared away, his head was no longer above the wall.

I turned to my companion, and addressed him in some warmth:

'Lieutenant Holingsworth! I command'——

'Captain Warfield,' interrupted he, in a tone of cool determination, 'you may command me in all matters of duty, and I shall obey you. This is a private affair; and, by the Eternal, the general himself—— Bah! I lose time; the villain will escape!' and before I could seize either himself or his bridle-rein, he shot his horse past me, and entered the gateway at a gallop.

I followed as quickly as I could, and reached the patio almost as soon as he; but too late to hinder him from his purpose. I grasped him by the arm, but with determined strength he wrenched himself free—at the same instant gliding out of his saddle. Pistol in hand, he rushed up the *escalera*, his trailing scabbard clanking upon the stone steps as he went. He was soon out of my sight, behind the parapet of the azotea.

Flinging myself from the saddle, I followed as fast as my legs would carry me. While on the stairway, I heard loud words and oaths above, the crash of falling objects, and then two shots following quick and fast upon each other. I heard screaming in a woman's voice, and a groan—the last uttered by a man. One of them is dead or dying, thought I.

On reaching the azotea—which I did in a few seconds of time—I found perfect silence there. I saw no one, male or female, living or dead! True, the place was like a garden, with plants, shrubs, and even trees growing in gigantic pots. I could not view it all at once. They might still be there behind the screen of leaves?

I ran to and fro over the whole roof; I saw flowerpots freshly broken. It was the crash of them I had heard coming up. I saw no men, neither Holingsworth nor Ijurra! They could not be standing up, or I should have seen them. 'Perhaps they are down among the pots—both. There were two shots. Perhaps both are down—dead!'

But where was she who screamed? Was it Isolina?

Half distracted, I rushed to another part of the roof. I saw a small escalera—a private stair—that led into the interior of the house. Ha! they must have gone down by it? she who screamed must have gone that way?

For a moment, I hesitated to follow; but it was no time to stand upon etiquette, and I was preparing to plunge down the stairway, when I heard shouting outside the walls, and then another shot from a pistol.

I turned, and stepped hastily across the azotea in the direction of the sounds. I looked over the parapet. Down the slope of the hill two men were running at the top of their speed, one after the other. The hindmost held in his hand a drawn sabre. It was Holingsworth still in pursuit of Ijurra!

The latter appeared to be gaining upon his vengeful pursuer, who, burdened with his accoutrements, ran heavily. The Mexican was evidently making for the woods that began at the bottom of the hill; and in a few seconds more he had entered the timber, and passed out of sight. Like a hound upon the trail, Holingsworth followed, and disappeared from my view at the same spot.

Hoping I might still be able to prevent the shedding of blood, I descended hastily from the azotea, mounted my horse, and galloped down the hill. I reached the edge of the woods where they had gone in, and followed some distance upon their trail; but I lost it at length, and came to a halt. I remained for some minutes listening for voices, or, what I more expected to hear, the report of a pistol. Neither sound reached me. I heard only the shouts of the vaqueros on the other side of the hill; and this reminding me of my duty, I turned my horse, and rode back to the hacienda.

There, everything was silent: not a face was to be seen. The inmates of the house had hidden themselves in rooms barred up and dark; even the damsels of the kitchen had disappeared, thinking, no doubt, that an attack would be made upon the premises, and that spoliation and plunder were intended.

I was puzzled how to act. Holingsworth's strange conduct had disarranged my ideas. I should have demanded admission, and explained the occurrence to Don Ramon; but I had no explanation to give; I rather needed one for myself; and under a painful feeling of suspense as to the result, I rode off from the place.

Half-a-dozen rangers were left upon the ground, with orders to await the return of Holingsworth, and then gallop after us; while the remainder of the troop, with Wheatley and myself in advance of the vast drove, took the route for the American camp.

DR LIVINGSTONE AND HIS DISCOVERIES.

It is not our business to follow in the steps of the newspapers, but an event has recently taken place of an interest so peculiar in science and civilisation, that it must of necessity find a record in our pages. For a considerable time past, the world has now and then had scraps of information before it touching the remarkable travels of Dr Livingstone in Africa; and the conviction gathered upon most minds that this intrepid missionary was one of the greatest of modern discoverers. No book, however, came forth from the wanderer to give tangible evidence of the facts, and his voice was heard from time to time only as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Great, therefore, was the excitement a few weeks ago, when it was found that, after an absence of sixteen years, he had returned, and that Dr Livingstone was actually to be seen in the body among the denizens of the metropolis.

Among the gatherings to greet this remarkable person, the most important, in a scientific point of view, was that of the Royal Geographical Society, on the evening of meeting, December 15. The ostensible business was to present the traveller, for the second time, with the highest distinction it is in the power of the Society to bestow—their gold medal. The first was given for traversing South Africa from the Cape of Good Hope by the Lake Ngami to Linyanti, and thence to the west coast, in 10 degrees south latitude; the present was for setting out anew from Linyanti, and completing the entire journey across South Africa.

Many interesting and crowded meetings have been held in the Society's rooms, but assuredly none more interesting or more crowded than on the occasion in question. Sir Roderick Murchison filled the chair with his accustomed tact and dignity; and among the eminent of his supporters were the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Portuguese minister, Professor Owen, Sir John Richardson, and African travellers not a few, including Mr Gordon Cumming in full Highland costume. Among the ladies, whose presence added a charm to the meeting, sat Lady Franklin, her widow's cap betokening the sad fate of her brave husband in the regions of polar frost. Many more names might we enumerate; suffice it, however, that the rooms were overcrowded, numbers of visitors having to stand during the whole time of the meeting, which was prolonged to an hour unusually late.

The proceedings began at half-past eight, when Sir Roderick entered, accompanied by a gentleman about forty years of age, somewhat spare in face and form, of average height, dark hair, brow furrowed through hardships, and complexion deeply bronzed, almost black, from exposure to a scorching sun. The appearance of this man was hailed by a general clapping of hands, stamping of feet, and such other demonstrations as are resorted to by a British audience when they desire to express hearty admiration, esteem, and welcome. The stranger bowed and took his seat. Dr Norton Shaw, the secretary of the Society, read sundry formal notices, and then the important business of the evening began.

The stranger was the Rev. Dr Livingstone, missionary and traveller, the man who has taken away the opprobrium from African geography, who has accomplished what many have attempted in vain ever since the earliest days of Portuguese discovery—namely, a journey across the continent of Southern Africa, from the centre to the western coast, and from the western coast washed by the Atlantic to the eastern shores on which beats the thunderous surf of the Indian Ocean. And this he has done without any great flourish of trumpets—without pecuniary grants from government—without companions or escort, save what the friendship of the natives yielded. Trusting in Providence, and strong in his hopeful self-reliance, he went manfully through the work that lay before him to do.

We have from time to time incidentally mentioned in the *Journal* Dr Livingstone's movements and discoveries, and need not apologise for this completer notice, in which we need but to follow the proceedings of the meeting. The president, rising, reminded the company that the gold medal of the Society had been awarded to Dr Livingstone in 1855; and now, the much greater feat accomplished by the adventurous traveller made a similar presentation so much the more pleasurable a duty. Great was the applause as the missionary received the golden token by which the Society acknowledge and honour his meritorious services.

Dr Livingstone commenced his reply by an apology for his 'imperfections in speech-making.' Sixteen years' absence from England, and the habit of speaking only the Bechuana and other African dialects during nearly the whole of that time, checks his fluency in his native language. The effect is observable also in his manner of speaking, for there is a metallic, ringing character about his voice, similar to what is described as peculiar to certain African tribes, some of whose sounds resemble the striking together of pieces of copper. His style of speech, moreover, is homely—such as would be familiar to simple-minded men; hence there is a novel sort of pleasure in listening to what he says. While he spoke, thanking the Society for the honour they had done him, and with great modesty of himself, we could enter into the spirit with which he wrote in one of his recent letters: 'I am not so elated in having performed what has not, to my knowledge, been done before, in traversing the continent, because the end of the geographical feat is but the beginning of the missionary enterprise. May God grant me life to do some more good to this poor Africa!' We unite in his 'hope that the medal will go down in his family as an heir-loom worth keeping.'

Then followed Mr Labouchere with a short speech and a resolution expressing thanks 'to the governors of the Portuguese settlements in Africa, who had so kindly received and entertained Dr Livingstone.' This was seconded by Sir Henry Rawlinson, of Ninevite fame; who told the meeting he wished the duty had fallen into abler hands, but that the chairman's commands were like the laws of the Medes and Persians, with which he (Sir H.) had some acquaintance. The resolution, we need hardly say, was carried by acclamation; his excellency Count Lavradio, the Portuguese minister, who asked leave to speak in French, making a very purpose-like speech in reply.

Then the secretary read portions of letters from Dr Livingstone, reserved especially for the meeting, giving an account of his travels, which were rendered the more interesting by *vivâ-voce* observations from the doctor himself. Our readers will perhaps remember that first among the enterprising missionary's exploits heard of in this country, was the discovery of the great Lake Ngami. This lake, it now appears, is for the most part shallow; fordable in places, and likely to dry up. This desiccation is no new phenomenon, for in the Bechuana country, and other regions to the south of the lake, there are ancient river-beds in which water has not flowed for ages, and most of the existing streams are dwindled to a mere rivulet. It is as if the interior of Africa were drying up. The commencement of the process is assigned by Dr Livingstone to a remote period, when a fissure made in a range of basaltic hills opened a new channel for the great river Leambye.

Up to the 20th parallel of south latitude, as is pretty well known, the drying process is well-nigh complete, for there the inhabitants depend, with rare exceptions, on fountains alone for their supply of water. But to the north of that parallel, the country is well watered, traversed, indeed, by a net-work of perennial rivers, and is of remarkable fertility. Elephants, giraffes, buffaloes, zebras, and many kinds of game abound, and three antelopes were shot of a species not yet known in England. The doctor's gun was the first ever fired in that country, and so inexperienced were the animals of their dangerous effects, that they stood still within bow-shot, and were easily killed. This is as different a country from the arid region to the south as from the western coast of Europeans, a maze of swamps and forests. It is elevated, cooled by pleasant breezes, and abounding in fruit and grain. This is the habitat of the true Nigritian, the curly-headed, jet-black negro, whose intelligent though simple race, when quickened by European knowledge, will one day rule the continent. A striking token of the direction of the genius of this people towards civilisation, is to be found in the social condition of their women. The will of the women is paramount, and at times they even become chiefs. 'If a man were asked to go anywhere,' said Mr Livingstone, 'or to agree to any arrangement, he answered: "I must go home and ask my wife." If she said "No," there was no possibility of getting him to move. Women sit in the councils; and while a Bechuana swears by his father, these negroes swear by their mother.' It may even be inferred that the ladies carry their supremacy a little too far. *If a woman beat her husband*, we are told, they are both taken to the market-place, and the wife is compelled to carry her injured lord home on her back amidst the cheers of the people. On these occasions, the women generally cry out: 'Give it him again!' In all parts of his travel, the women shewed great kindness to Dr Livingstone and his party; and, what is noteworthy, the English name is known as that of a people 'who like the black man.'

But the most extraordinary circumstance announced by Dr Livingstone is the salubrity of this vast region. 'Some of the districts of the interior,' says he, 'are perfect *sanatoria;* and among the pure negro family, many diseases that affect the people of Europe are unknown. Small-pox and consumption have not been known for twenty years, and scrofula, cancer, and hydrophobia are seldom heard of.'

As regards natural resources, there are large beds of coal, and deposits of copper and iron ores; gold is found in the streams; grain is produced in immense abundance; indigo, quinine, senna leaves—the last in exhaustless supply; the sugar-cane flourishes, although the natives have no idea of sugar; there are whole forests of cinchona, and wax and honey, and valuable fibrous plants, one of which resembles flax—to say nothing of ivory, that can be obtained in any quantity. In one place, the grave of a chief was decorated by thirty large elephants' tusks placed upright in the ground. The country is so fertile, that in the gardens cultivated by the natives, a constant process of sowing and reaping goes on all the year round. All this was detailed by Dr Livingstone with the intelligence of real knowledge, for he is not one of those travellers who go abroad merely to look, describe appearances, and record impressions. Having a competent knowledge of various sciences, as he journeyed along he made observations astronomical, geological, and geometrical, noted the varieties of climate, and took botanical and zoological notes. In addition to these important matters, he had an eye to the commercial products of the various territories and the industrial habits of the natives, and their inclination to trade.

Dr Livingstone went far himself to solve the question as to how the resources of the country could be made available for trade. When first at Linyanti, he succeeded in persuading the chief to let him lead a party with merchandise to the western coast, under a promise to conduct them back. The journey was accomplished, and the party reached the Portuguese settlement of St Paul de Loando, amazed at what they saw of white men and their ways. Here was one path to the sea opened; and since then a second party, led by an Arab, despatched by the chief himself, have repeated the adventure, and safely. The doctor kept his promise, and conducted his troop back to their homes, from' whence he afterwards guided them in the opposite direction.

It was in these journeys he found that a long sloping ridge rises between each coast and the interior, whereby the interior becomes a broad shallow basin, with so little outfall in some places, that rain-water lies on the plain until it is evaporated. It is probable that some of the water may find its way to the streams that feed the upper course of the Nile. The Leambye is, however, the principal drain. This is a magnificent stream. Dr Livingstone describes the scenery about the falls where the great river, similarly to the Nile, tumbles suddenly into the narrow basaltic cleft, as of wondrous beauty. The river was followed down to its confluence with the Zambezi, past the Portuguese settlements of Tête and Sena, and to Quilimane at the mouth on the Mozambique Channel. This was the second path to the sea.

But this mouth, as well as another to the south, has for many years been slowly filling up. For six months of the year, the bar at Quilimane is impassable, and always dangerous. A boat's crew of eight men from the *Dart* were all drowned in attempting to pass it to convey a message to Dr Livingstone. This danger, it appears, may be avoided; for the doctor calls attention to the existence of other mouths with safe harbours further to the north, approachable at all seasons.

It is remarkable that the Zambezi, though deriving from the Leambye, is not flooded at the same time; for the latter inundates the upper country for hundreds of miles in July, when the former is all but dry; and in March and April, when the Zambezi is overflowing its banks, the Leambye is lowest.

Henceforth, a considerable portion of the blank in our maps of Africa will be filled up. The Mountains of the Moon, with their heretofore summits of snow, will probably turn out to be a range trending north-east from the Leambye, with glittering peaks of a rock resembling quartz, of which specimens have been laid before the Geological Society. As for the central region of the Gazetteers, scorched by an insufferable sun, in the rays of which no European could live, we have seen that it is in many important respects healthier than England, and a land abounding in natural wealth. As to the other contributions of Dr Livingstone to human knowledge, we have the testimony of the Rev. T. Maclear, astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope. 'The number of his observations,' writes this gentleman, 'is astonishing, when we consider the difficulties he had to encounter. He observed for latitude and longitude at every interesting point, particularly at the confluence of other rivers with the Zambezi, the bends, the falls, the more important villages. In short, he has opened up, geographically speaking, that hitherto unknown section of the continent. But he has done more: he has graphically described the character of the country, the inhabitants; and altogether his collection of facts would fill a volume, of deep interest to science, commerce, and, last not least, to humanity.'

After Dr Livingstone had concluded his discourse, various inquiries and observations were made by different speakers. Professor Owen said that he had had a conversation with the traveller seventeen years ago in the Museum of the College of Surgeons, and rejoiced to hear his accounts of great collections of fossil bones, and new forms of animal life. Mr Gordon Cumming related how much he owed to Dr Livingstone's hospitality while on his famous hunting-journey; and Captain Vardon, himself an African traveller, said that after hearing the narrative of a journey across the whole continent, he felt as if he had only been to Blackheath and back.

One word in conclusion about the missionary personally. David Livingstone was born in the village of Blantyre Works, Blantyre. He was the second son of Neil Livingstone, long a resident of the place, who, with his wife, Agnes Hunter, continued there for thirty years after their marriage. About sixteen years ago, the family removed to Hamilton, where the mother and two sisters of the traveller still reside, and under their care are his own children. He has two brothers in America—one in business in Canada, and the other a minister in the United States. David Livingstone wrought at the Blantyre mills as a piecer-boy; but subsequently, when he had attained to the dignity of a spinner, he attended the classes in Glasgow during the winter months, resuming his employment at the mills in the summer vacation. Having formed a connection with the London Missionary Society, he left the Blantyre Works; and after completing his studies at the college, Glasgow, he went out to Africa, and up to the Bechuana country, where he married a daughter of the zealous missionary Dr Moffat, whose name is well known in England. Here he was authorised by the London Missionary Society to explore the country to the north. When his travelling enterprise had succeeded as we have seen, and Europe rang with his fame, the commanders of Her Majesty's ships in the Mozambique Channel had orders to inquire for Dr Livingstone; and in one of those ships he got a passage from Quilimane, and came home by the overland route.

THE STORY OF AN ENGAGED YOUNG PERSON.

It seemed a very long journey that we poor parliamentary passengers were taking, in this early November weather, all the way from London to Liverpool. The stoppages were frequent enough, but of such short duration, that we had scarcely time to get ourselves warmed at the crowded grate before the inexorable bell rang for us to start again, and off we went with a shriek into the blinding fog. It was positively too dark to read with any comfort, even if one was so indifferent to the biting air as to lend one of his hands to hold the book up: we put both of them in our pockets instead, or more usually sat upon them, to keep them warm. It was only when the guard came from time to time to look at our tickets, and trod upon our feet, that we began to feel we had them, so dead they were with cold.

'Sir,' observed a comical-looking tailor to this official, 'your seats are too narrow to be sat upon after my cross-legged fashion, so please be careful; for although my toes are frozen, they will not bear.'

This produced a laugh, and then arose a little talk, principally about how miserable we were, and then, as poor people use, we began to tell what our business was upon at Liverpool; whereupon it seemed that half the carriageful at least were emigrants. Each had his say; and every tale, however roughly told, had more or less of interest, because it was real and human, so that we quite forgot our weariness and cold for a little time. Then, since this had answered so well, the sprightly tailor proposed that one of the party should tell us a regular story, of his own life if he chose, but not only of his present circumstances, but of what had led to them—which was an idea we all received quite rapturously, expecting the tailor himself to begin. But he said no; we must draw lots for that. So producing some long slips of measuring-paper, he wrote a word on one, and shook them altogether in a hat, and sent it round. There was a great deal of giggling among the ladies, and a great deal of secret trepidation among the men, but for a long time nobody pulled out the fatal lot: at last a burst of laughter from those about one of the corner-seats announced that the victim had been selected, and that from among the ladies.

She was certainly the plainest of the female passengers. Her nose turned up, and her mouth had scarcely any turn at all; her hair was red, and so were the rims of her eyes; and her eyes themselves were far from being good ones; but there was a certain piquancy and sprightliness about her, too, as though she had been a French lady's-maid rather than an English one. She looked as if she could put her hand and her well-rounded arm to anything, and had been very good-tempered and obliging throughout the journey. It was understood—it had been expressed, indeed, already rather triumphantly by the young lady herself—that she was an engaged young person, going out to Australia to be married; that there was a somebody waiting upon the other hemisphere with outstretched hands, yearning to receive her as his bride. She would be a capital wife for a settler without doubt, although perhaps in England we should have called her rather a settler for a wife. She seemed to know very well, indeed, what we were all likely to think about this matter; but she didn't care.

If I had been better looking—she began her story with this—I might never have got a husband, or at least not the money to marry him upon, which is the same thing. The unsuitableness of my face to what I may be allowed to call a very tolerable figure, has been literally the means of bestowing happiness, as I hope, upon Joseph, and of putting L.400 into my own pocket. And this was how it all came about: my late mistress, who was very kind to me, and had intended, poor thing—for she told me so—to leave me comfortably provided for, took me over with her, seven years ago, to Paris. She was a widow lady, fond of a gay life and brilliant amusements; and that place suited her so well, that she made it her home, and I, but little loath, remained there too. Joseph and I had kept company together before that time, but he was not so foolish as to wish me to give up my expectations for the sake of a hurried marriage; he said that he would wait patiently, dear fellow, although the great salt sea was to roll between us, and there could be no chance of his getting a letter more than once a day. He was a mason's assistant in London, and very hardly worked, it seemed, for he himself was not able to reply nearly so often; however, of course I was not a bird, that I could be in two places at once, so I made the best of it, and was as happy as a confidential lady's-maid, under such circumstances, could hope to be.

One evening I had been preparing my mistress, who was a very splendid dresser, for the opera; my only fellow-servant was on leave of absence for some days; and except the porter in the courtyard, there was nobody, when the carriage had driven off that night, in the whole house save myself; therefore, having nothing better—or at least nicer—to do, and being in my mistress's bedroom amongst her beautiful robes and ornaments, it was hardly to be expected that I should resist such an opportunity of trying them on. The room, besides being charmingly hung with mirrors, had a delicious full-length swinging-glass, and before this I amused myself for a good long while. I beheld how Mademoiselle Elizabeth Martin — that is my present name, but dear Joseph's is Andrews—how she looked in bareges, in silks, in muslins, for the morning; and how lace and satin, and low sleeves, with pearls, became her for evening wear; finally, equipping myself in a particularly pleasant glacé silk walking-dress, with a bonnet and falling veil fit for a bride, I could not help twisting round a little, to see as much of myself as possible, and contrasting the effect at the same time with that of madame—who was beautiful enough, but indifferently proportioned—I involuntarily remarked aloud: 'Well, we may be plain in the face, but we are certainly unexceptionable behind.' It was an absurd thing to say even to one's self, and I remember blushing like a beet, as though it were not quite out of the question that I could be overheard. There were several jewel-drawers — this ruby upon my middle finger, a ring belonging to my mistress's late husband, was in one of them—but I had no time for more than to set off a handsome necklace or two, and to very much regret that my ears had not been punched for the accommodation of an especial pair of diamond earrings, before I heard wheels in the courtyard, and my mistress came home. Everything had been put away very carefully, and I undressed her and saw her to bed as usual. She was more than commonly kind and gentle in her manner that night, as I have since thought at least; and when she wished me her *bon soir*, she added: 'I am sure we shall both be tired to-morrow, Bessie; so call me an hour later, and take an extra sleep yourself.' I was never to hear my good mistress speak any more.

Did I dream that night that she had left me all her wardrobe, and that I was married in the glacé silk? Did I, even in my sleep, build schemes of what I would do with the money that my dead mistress might enrich me with? No; as I hope for heaven, and to meet dear Joseph, with all my woman's vanity, I had my woman's heart too, beating true and warm, and I thought no shadow of evil. I told them so in court, where all looked black against me, and they believed me even there. But in that morning, late, when the sun was shining full upon the window, and the noise of the people going about their daily work was full and clear, I saw a frightful sight, a ghastly horror that the day but served to make more hideous and unnatural—my mistress murdered in her bed! No answer when I knocked; again no answer. The curtains at the bedside were close drawn, but through the open shutters a fiery flood of light fell red upon the carpet and the curtains—ay, and on the corner of the snow-white counterpane, red also. It was blood! I thought there had been a rain of blood; upon the handles of the drawers, upon the toilet-cover, on the dressing-case, upon the towels, in the basin—everywhere where the murderer's hands had been after their deadly work; and in the bed—I dared not look in the bed; but in that great swing-glass, where I had decked myself but a few hours ago, I saw it all, and every mirror in the room was picturing the same sight—there lay the corpse, the murdered woman with her gaping throat. . . . . They thought at first that I was murdered too, lying so stiff and cold in that death-chamber. I answered nothing to their questions, neither in the house nor in the prison. I knew nothing, nor could I have told them had I known, until Joseph came. It seemed to me then quite natural that he should be with me—nothing praiseworthy, nothing. (This dear little engaged young person's eyes began to get redder about the rims at this reminiscence, and her story to assume an incoherent as well as choky character.) I did not understand how much I owed him: how, not having heard from me for some time, and reading in the paper that an English lady's-maid had been taken up in Paris for a murder in the Rue St Honoré, but that she refused to speak, and even had perhaps in reality lost her senses, he started off at once, giving up his employ, and borrowing and begging what he could, and knowing no word of French but the name of that one street, he hurried to me: so that my mind came back again, and I could tell them what I knew. All he did, he said, was less than he ought to have done, because he had behaved ill to me of old (which, I am sure, dear Joseph never had, nor thought of doing). He stood by me in court—in the prisoners' place along with me he stood and shared my shame. I told about the jewels, and of my trying them on; how everything was safe, and the doors locked, and the chamber-window too high to be climbed up to, though a man might have let himself down from it into the yard. And then I learned for the first time that all that afternoon and night the murderer had lain hidden under my mistress's bed; that he must have been there all that time—think of it!—that I was trying on the dresses and the ornaments; that there was murder waiting in that chamber all the while: it made me shudder even then, amidst that crowded court, with Joseph by me. They thought it very strange, they said, that since there was so much time before him between my mistress's departure and return, that he had not murdered me instead. He had carried off all the jewels—those in the drawers as well as those which my poor mistress had worn that very evening; but from the moment he had dropped into the courtyard, the police could find no trace of him. A mere suspicion fell upon the brother of the gate-porter; but it was so vague that he was not put upon his trial. A great sum was offered in reward for the apprehension of the murderer, making up, with what was offered by my late mistress's family, nearly L.400. She died without a will, poor lady, and they were not disposed to give me anything beyond the wages due to me. After my acquittal, a collection for mine and Joseph's benefit was made by some good people; but the money only sufficed to bring us back to England. Joseph had to work out a heavy debt, incurred upon my account, and I went into service again at once, resolving to do my best to help him. At the end of two years, poor fellow, except that he had discharged his obligation, he was but little better off than at their beginning; and despairing of ever getting a living for us both in the old country, he sailed twelve months ago for Sydney. Whichever of us first got rich, it was arranged, should cross the seas after the other; and until very lately, it seemed that we might each stop where we were, engaged young persons, till we died.

I was nursery-maid in my new place, and was taking the youngest child across Hyde Park one afternoon, when I was followed by an impertinent man; I had my "ugly" on, for the sun was hot, so that my face might have been like Venus, for all he knew to the contrary; and otherwise, I flatter myself I was not disagreeable looking. At all events, I attracted the wretch, who kept close behind me. He was an abominable person, with a foreign appearance—which I had reason enough for disliking—and eyes that looked different ways, but neither of them nice ways, so that I was glad enough to get in sight of the policemen about the marble arch. He saw that there was no time to be lost, if he meant to get a good look at me at all, so he passed me on a sudden very quickly, turned round, and looked up into my face. I gave him a very tolerable stare, too, because I knew it would disappoint him, after his great expectations; and it did so; and not only that, for it made him give a sort of villainous grin, which I hope I may never see again, and he broke out, as if he could not help it for the life of him, with 'Well, we may be plain in the face, but we are unexceptionable behind.' I cried out 'Murder' and 'Police!' as loud as I could, and the man was secured at once. No human being except the one who had been under the bed, her murderer, could have known those words, which I had spoken alone, before madame's toilet-glass. He denied everything, of course, and said it was an unjust detention; but in little more than half an hour, a telegraphic message from the Paris authorities set his mind at ease in this respect, and demanded his presence in that city. He was the elder brother of the gate-porter, whom I had never before seen; and what I had to tell, in addition to the previous suspicions against him, procured his conviction. He was sent to the galleys for life. This ruby ring, which he wore upon his little finger, I identified as having been in the jewel-drawer that very night. It was bestowed upon me after the trial by the heir-at-law, and I obtained besides the L.400 reward. If I had been pretty, you see, there would not have been any occasion for me to have remarked upon it that evening, and I might have remained, my whole life long, an engaged young person.

THE SMOKE-NUISANCE.

In what combination of ingredients, typical of the 'dark livery of wo,' should the painter dip his brush or the writer his pen, who should attempt to set forth on canvas or paper the multiplied evils and miseries inflicted upon us by this gigantic annoyance! Who shall depict its ravages, or describe its effects upon our health, our linen, our spirits, our tempers?

Only let any one who has travelled, even as far as Paris, recall his first impressions of the noble effect produced by a great city spread out at his feet, as he gazed upon it from the column in the Place Vendôme, and the heights of Montmartre. Let him recollect the *green* trees of the boulevards, and the brilliant contrast of acacia foliage with white freestone, which, in the environs of that wonderful city, actually gladden the heart with their sunny cheerfulness of aspect; and then let him turn to London; let him observe—when he can see them—the smoke-dried trees of our parks, and the soot-begrimed walls of our buildings, and the dull leaden hue of our atmosphere; and when he has it pressed home upon him, that the chief cause of this comparatively miserable state of things is sea-coal smoke, I think he will agree with me in thinking that any man who puts forward a plausible theory for the purification of the atmosphere of London, is entitled to a calm and dispassionate hearing.

It is indeed humiliating to an Englishman to return from a continental tour, or to arrive fresh from the pure air of the country, and take the plunge beneath the almost sable pall which at all times, when the household fires are lighted, broods over this great city!

We have no need to enlarge upon this topic; we all daily groan over it, and under it too; and the question still forces itself upon us: 'Can nothing more be done to get rid of the smoke-nuisance?'

We have applied a remedy—such as it is—to the evil, so far as it is connected with factories and steam-boats; but there are still tens of thousands of hearths manufacturing smoke below, and vomiting it forth above. It is my object to shew that a complete, not partial remedy, simple and practicable, is at hand; and that the abatement of the nuisance rests entirely with ourselves.

Perhaps some of my readers will say: 'The man is merely preluding a puff for Arnott's smoke-consuming grates;' and I hasten to assure them that, although concurring in the soundness of their principle, it is not my object in this paper to propose, as a cure for the evil in question, the universal—and to be universal it must be compulsory—use of the grates in question. Most assuredly, were I the autocrat of the British Isles, as Alexander is of 'All the Russias,' I would issue a ukase to compel the use of these fireplaces, if found, on mature experience, to be effectual for the object in view, rather than allow my capital to be seen from a distance only by its smoke; but, leaving the ingenious inventor of what I believe to be a meritorious system, to make his own way, I proceed to observe that, if I mistake not, there is a mode of achieving our object, which is far more universally applicable, and on many accounts preferable. I mean, that while this grate, or any other, which, properly attended to, will consume its own smoke, remains just where it was before, what I am about to propose would extend itself with more facility, and in most cases be more effectual, as requiring less skill and care in its application.

Perhaps it is as convenient a mode of approaching our subject as any other, if we allow ourselves to imagine the same thing done next session for private, that actually has been done for public chimneys—namely, a law made rendering it penal to throw smoke into the atmosphere after a given day. The question arises at once: 'What are we to do?' One would say, 'I will put up the smokeless grates;' another, 'I shall burn nothing but *coke;*' and a third, 'I shall adopt the plan of cooking by *gas*, and warm my house with *gas stoves;*' while still another might observe, that government should take care that the metropolis was served regularly with *anthracite coal*. Here you see, gentle reader, that in a moment no less than four separate plans are at once suggested by the urgency of the case supposed; and no practical man can have the least doubt that the adoption of any one of the four would completely answer his purpose, and keep him out of the meshes of the law. What I would propose, then, is simply, that either one or all of these methods should be rendered compulsory, according as experience shall establish the superior efficacy or economy either of that one, or a combination of them all.

Putting it in another form, my proposal is, that no smoke should be tolerated in large towns; and that it should be made universally known that, by the means enumerated above, all the objects attained by the use of fire can be arrived at without any necessity for producing smoke.

It only remains for me now to offer some observations in connection with the several processes adverted to, and endeavour to find out what may be the most desirable and practicable mode of bringing them into operation.

The Arnott grate, I doubt not, is a good contrivance; but it might be a curious speculation to inquire how long it would take before London could be supplied with it in its length and breadth, and from kitchen to garret, in all its manifold human habitations. For my own part, this idea alone would prevent my feeling sanguine of its coming effectually into play; but it might occupy a very important place in the proposed improvement. Being expensive, it would not suit the majority of cases as well as some cheaper system; but it might figure to advantage in a vast number of sitting-rooms, &c., belonging to the wealthier classes. In fact, it ought to be a most valuable adjunct, although, if I am right, it could not stand alone in doing the work proposed.

We come now to the other system, on which I base my chief expectations. Coal consists of *coke and gas*, popularly speaking. Gas is a heating as well as an illuminating power; and its value in the former sense is daily becoming better known—all the essential work of warming apartments can, it is now admitted, be not only performed economically with gas-stoves, but with a great accession of convenience and cleanliness. The very saving of a servant's time in carrying coals, and cleaning grates, &c., is a great economy, as every prudent housekeeper will readily admit. Now, supposing that a great development of the gas-system was to take place from a general use of this beautiful material for cooking and warmth; this would inevitably throw into the market a vast amount of smokeless fuel in the shape of coke. This is the very thing we require; for many will prefer to use a *calorifère* fed with coke, or some form of stove now in use to any other mode of warming. Some will prefer a char-coke fire in the kitchen to the gas-cooking plan; and some would probably combine the two, having a series of gas-burners for boiling, stewing, &c., and a clear fire for roasting; although this can be done admirably with gas alone. Lastly, it is highly probable that native anthracite would find its way to the metropolis in large quantities as soon as the smoke-nuisance was put down by law.

Now, since there are so many concurrent ways by which this object may be attained; and since far more than the first steps are already taken in the direction indicated here; and since the deliverance of London from its smoke would require merely an extension of means and appliances which are already at work, and become essential parts of our social system, I cannot but think that the time is come when all reasonable men ought to give this matter their serious consideration.

I do not for a moment doubt that what I propose is strictly practicable. It will not admit of question, that any London householder who chose it could, at this moment, resolve that within a week his house should cease to contribute its *quotum* of unconsumed carbon to the mass of city-smoke. He could put up at a few hours' notice the additional gas-fittings which would be required, where he chose that gas should do the work hitherto performed by coal alone; and, if he chose to vary it a little, he could obtain at a fair price a supply of coke for a portion of that work; and he could get an Arnott grate into his drawing-room, so as to enjoy still the pleasure of a 'cheerful fireside.' I give this in proof that what I recommend can be done, and done effectually; but I am not so visionary as to let it escape me that what one could do, all could not do. The supply of gas and coke, depending on, and relative as they are to each other, is now capable of a certain extension, but that necessity has its limits. In order to carry out our plan *in extenso*, it would doubtless be necessary to create new means of supply; and it becomes a question of detail, into which I shall not attempt to enter now, what mode of doing this would be the best for the public—whether by 'consumers' companies' created for the occasion, or what else.

No doubt reasonable time should be allowed; and the carrying into effect a project of this kind may involve details which escape observation in the first instance. Let it only receive the attention which such a subject demands from gifted and practical men; and let not class interests and private considerations be allowed to sway the public judgment, and without a reasonable doubt it will speedily be found that what our 'collective wisdom' has seen fit to do in respect of the great smoke-producers, may be done rather more effectually as regards the smaller ones; and for this simple reason, that for private dwellings we have now access, as I have shewn, or can very easily obtain it, to a perfectly smokeless fuel, with the use of which we are already familiar; while the owners of factories, &c., have to contend with a real difficulty in trying to consume a smoky material without allowing any of the smoke to escape. I need not say how great this difficulty must be; but I would just insinuate that a good deal may be done by a strong determination to do it in accordance with those principles of feeding, and attention to detail, which are now tolerably well known.

Just think, gentle reader, of a *smokeless London!* a bright sky, green trees, the possibility of growing flowers in pots, and leaving pictures so that they can be seen. Think of being able to see one another across the street; and averting the danger of broken bones at every crossing in our autumnal and winter fogs! Think of all which is included in the idea of the removal of the smoke-nuisance, and then do what you can to effect it. If you can think of a better plan than mine, I shall most heartily welcome it. If you see any difficulty in what I propound, say so honestly, and I will either honestly admit it, or endeavour to shew you how it may be removed.

I need scarcely add, that I have taken London merely as a type—what is true there is true in Edinburgh (Auld Reekie!) or any other large city. May they all soon burn their smoke!

CALCULATING-MACHINE.

M. Thomas, of Colmar, says the *Moniteur*, has lately made the finishing improvements in the calculating-machine called the arithmometer, at which he has been working for upwards of thirty years. Pascal and Leibnitz, in the seventeenth century, and Diderot at a later period, endeavoured to construct a machine which might serve as a substitute for human intelligence in the combination of figures, but their efforts failed. M. Thomas's arithmometer may be used without the least trouble or possibility of error, not only for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, but also for much more complex operations, such as the extraction of the square root, involution, the resolution of triangles, &c. A multiplication of eight figures by eight others is made in 18 seconds; a division of sixteen figures by eight figures in 24 seconds; and in 1¼ minutes one can extract the square root of sixteen figures, and also prove the accuracy of the calculation. The arithmometer adapts itself to every sort of combination. As an instance of the wonderful extent of its powers, we may state that it can furnish in a few seconds products amounting to 999,999,999,999,999,999,999,999,999,999—a marvellous number, comparable to the infinite multitude of stars which stud the firmament, or the particles of dust which float in the atmosphere. The working of this instrument is, however, most simple. To raise or lower a nut-screw, to turn a winch a few times, and by means of a button to slide off a metal plate from left to right, or from right to left, is the whole secret. Instead of simply reproducing the operations of man's intelligence, the arithmometer relieves that intelligence from the necessity of making the operations. Instead of repeating responses dictated to it, this instrument instantaneously dictates the proper answer to the man who asks it a question. It is not matter producing material effect, but matter which thinks, reflects, reasons, calculates, and executes all the most difficult and complicated arithmetical operations with a rapidity and infallibility which defies all the calculators in the world. The arithmometer is, moreover, a simple instrument, of very little volume, and easily portable. It is already used in many great financial establishments, where considerable economy is realised by its employment.

A FIRESIDE SONG.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

Give Hope a place beside our evening-fire;
 'Twill add a warmer relish to its glow,
And bring out pictures from the smouldering pyre
 Which darkness and despair can never shew;
'Twill breathe of Night that ushers the glad Day,
And the white Winter followed by green May.

'Twill draw forth images of suns that rise
 From the dark bosom of the passing mist—
Of smiling glances drying tearful eyes,
 And wan cheeks into roses new health-kist;
Hope is not always false, whate'er men say,
Since after Winter follows the green May.

Cold is the night, but colder is the street—
 Be thankful for the fagot in the grate;
And dwell on every mercy thou dost meet,
 Blessing the Hand which spares thee griefs that wait
On many a sufferer, in whose sterner way
Lingers the Winter longer than the May.

Thank God for this, that Hope hath come from Him,
 And nestles in our hearts, like birds that find
'Neath some kind thatch shelter from hail-storm grim,
 And food where stacks of corn keep off the wind:
Stay, heavenly Hope! and teach us well to pray
That Winter may be followed by green May!

CRIME AND CRIMINALS IN LONDON.

London is labouring under a plague of criminals, so accurately known to the police, that the commissioners have actually reported their numbers to amount to 107 burglars, 110 housebreakers—the distinction is the commissioners', not ours—38 highway robbers, 773 pickpockets, 3657 sneaksmen or common thieves, 11 horse-stealers, and 141 dog-stealers; besides a whole host of other offenders, but not habitually using violence, which swell the number of criminals in London to 16,900 known to the police. It is perfectly notorious that all these ruffians carry on their business as systematically as butchers and tailors—that they are never without the intent to commit a felony —and that, when they are not so doing, it is because they have not the opportunity. If the peace of London and the prosperity of its inhabitants—now preyed upon by those gentry to the extent of from £40,000 to £50,000 a year—could be secured by locking up less than 300 known, hardened, and incorrigible offenders, before they have the opportunity of committing another felony, we do not think that the British constitution, sensitive as it is, would sink under the shock.—*Morning Post.*

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A SPIRITUAL EXTENSION OF A PHYSICAL LAW.

Of late years, the effects of different employments on the physical health of man have been freely discussed, and systematically traced, by means statistical and otherwise. That those effects are too often injurious, is an undisputed fact; while it is at the same time clear that they may be prevented, removed, or modified, by remedial contrivances or treatment. The maladies or malformations which arise from excess, possess their corresponding nostrum—moderation—or may be at least partially avoided by counteracting discipline proper to the case. Those which result from directly detrimental agency, can only be successfully combated by its mechanical removal or avoidance. The physiologist must use his skill to determine why a given kind of labour should give rise to a given form of ailment, and thus scientifically account for the cholic of painters, the wasting of grinders, the phthisis of masons, the gutta serena of needlewomen, or the nervous ruin of quicksilver miners. But it is sufficiently obvious to every one, without reference to any greater authority than common sense, that the multiform complaints to which working flesh is heir by reason of its labour, are due to one common and adequate cause—the breach of physical laws, by fealty to which humanity holds vigour and life. If a man, regardless of gravitation, throws himself from a precipice, it is not surprising if his neck be broken and his limbs mangled; if he submerges himself in water, he may reasonably expect soon to become comatose; or if he takes shelter beneath a tree in a thunder-storm, it will not be very wonderful if the lightning strike him dead. Extreme as these illustrations may appear, they involve neither more nor less than the reason and cause for those slower but not less certain evils which follow the overstraining of a sense, the inhalation of unwholesome air, or a too sedentary mode of life.

It is not a part of my intention to enter more fully on this subject, as it affects the physical part of man—his body; I wish to point out that strictly analogous results, in obedience to a strictly analogous, or rather the self-same law, may be observed in the spiritual part of man—his mind. After all, the whole matter is but a corollary of the great principle of law which reigns throughout the universe, so far as man is cognizant thereof, and which, from a moral point of view, is expressed in the reflection, that the rain falls both on the just and the unjust. There is a noteworthy parallelism between the body and the mind running through the history of man. Just as there is one great type of the human frame, to which all men conform, so is there one type of soul. As the Caucasian mould is distinguishable from the Mongol, so the Caucasian mind is different from the Mongol. As nations physically differ, so mentally they vary; as family features bear the common mark of kinship, so do their spiritual attributes; and as each face possesses its own individuality, so has each character. Hereditary physique has its analogue in hereditary tone of mind; and it would not be difficult to adduce instances in which scientific, literary, or musical talent has descended through several generations. Although, therefore, character is essentially and originally diverse, there can be no doubt that its development, like that of the physical frame, may be perfect or imperfect, healthy or diseased, according to its surroundings and the facilities afforded it; and so far, and so far only, man is the creature of circumstance.

Mental philosophy, dealing with spiritual phenomena, evades the touchstone of experiment, is not amenable to units of reference, and owes no allegiance to ratios: thus it lies without the region over which the savant has dominion, and can never, perhaps, take its place amongst the exacter sciences. I say *perhaps*, because in these days of progress, especially physiological, it is hard to regard anything as entirely impossible. Nevertheless, from the infancy of philosophy it has been a recognised truth—without which recognition no mental philosophy could indeed exist—that there are spiritual laws no less sure in their effect, and constant in their energy, than those physical laws which ordain that the rain-drop should fall and the planets hold their untiring courses. And it is no less true, that in so far as man conforms to these spiritual ordinances, his mind shall be vigorous and healthy; and in so far as he disregards and violates them, his mind shall be distorted and diseased. It requires no difficult analysis to verify this conclusion by the characters of those we see around us in society. In the literature of fiction, in daily life, and colloquial speech, we discover a common conviction and thought, that different professions and occupations induce warped and diseased forms of character peculiar to themselves.

I believe that there may be and is a healthy conservatism; but I hold the conservatism of lawyers to be a professional disease. They deal habitually with dry forms, venerable to them for their antiquity, and valuable for the toil that has been bestowed upon them, though mummies to the world at large. It is hardly to be expected that a man will readily acknowledge the learned lore on which he has spent his best days, and to which he looks for sustenance and honour at the hands of society, to be outgrown, and only worthy of such respect as is due to a cast-off suit. No doubt many a special pleader felt a pang, sharp and severe, when his elaborate and time-honoured entanglements were swept to the heap of things useless, and nuisances not to be endured; and many a conveyancer, mourning over the decline of his country, believes John Doe and Richard Roe to be as essential elements of the British constitution as her Majesty or the House of Lords. But worse than the conservative ailment is the disease of professional morality. It is the misfortune of patient students of the law that the moral elements of a 'case' have to be disregarded, or, rather, 'the height of reason' having determined generally what course is most conformable to moral law, it only remains to accept as the solution of the immediate question, the dictum or decision of a judge or bench of judges. The duty of the learned counsel is to make the best case he can for the litigant who fees him; to evade the telling of the whole truth, it may be; to explain away unpleasant facts; to influence the judge by an appeal to the law, and bamboozle, with appeals to the feelings, the jury. It is obvious that a man who devotes his whole energies to labour of this description, may easily become one-sided in his view of moral dignity and truth; but if the mere learned counsel is liable to somewhat stunted growth of the conscience, and monomaniacal antipathy to reform, the mere attorney is predisposed to graver forms of spiritual derangement. If the learned counsel is concerned with mummies, the mere attorney feeds on the skins of mummies. The pleader at least vivifies his antiquated notions with a galvanic semblance of life; he can shew how they were praiseworthy and useful in the year twelve hundred; but to the attorney they remain as lifeless as parchment, to the flavour of which his taste has been habituated. The moral element, even of feudal jurisprudence, does not come within his ken. His court of conscience is at Westminster. A right neither in equity nor at common law is no right at all. With him the first question is, 'Is there a loophole?' the second, 'Can my client slip through?' There is indeed a quasi-code for his guidance, that of respectability, which society has made for him; but the highest form of duty, which his inward eye can look upon and live, is his duty to his client, and the leading commandments for his government are: 'Thou shalt not make an unnecessary admission,' and 'Thou shalt not omit to take advantage of a point of law.' It is not to be wondered at that the practitioner becomes cautious and suspicious, disdainful of his fellow-men, a lover of technicality and detail, an upholder of red-tapism and routine, and that society styles him the keen, shrewd Mr Ferret.

In thus depicting the unwholesome character of Mr Ferret, I do not intend to throw an aspersion on a profession tempted in no ordinary way, and possessing many high-spirited and noble members: I could not reasonably do this, any more than I could truthfully represent the majority of needlewomen as blind, or of masons as consumptive; but assuredly there is some truth to be recognised in the legal characters as depicted on the stage; and there must be some shadow of ground for the gibes of satirists and the reproaches of common speech.

In a conversation on reading, some time ago given to the world by a celebrated essayist, it is laid down—I cannot exactly quote the words—that the direction of our leisure studies ought to be as much as possible opposite to the tendency of our profession and habits of life—that a lawyer, for instance, should read works of imagination, and, I may add, philosophy. The undeniable tendency of the study of the law, even in superior minds, is to narrow their view, and raise detail and form above principle. Nothing can be more philosophically true than the remark of the essayist; and for my own part, I conceive that even where the mind is naturally averse from a particular branch of thought, thus shewing a natural inaptitude, great benefit may be derived from a forced attention to the untasteful subject; for the defective faculties will thus be strengthened, as the brawny arm of the smith is rendered muscular by the exercise of his craft. It is a noticeable fact, that the foremost law-reformer in the profession is one who is remarkable for his attainments and ability in literature and science.

Perhaps there is no more intelligent or better-informed body of men in English society than that which practises the medical profession. We will not examine too minutely into their antecedents, when they were students walking the hospitals; but take them as they are when settled in their country 'habitats,' in the exercise of their useful functions. Probably this superiority is owing, in the first place, to their necessary acquaintance with some of the most important and attractive sciences; and, secondly, to their varied experience of character under the most trying circumstances. It is true they are not remarkable for business-like virtues, but neither are they for business-like vices. They are, for the most part, religious without being fanatics, and take sensible and decided views on social questions without being hot partisans. Nevertheless, there are certain mental aberrations to which they are subject, and which arise from their familiarity with suffering and death, and the dependence which they daily observe of the mind on the body. There is a tendency to materialism in their philosophy, and sometimes an apparent callousness to pain. I don't know that it can properly be regarded as a fallacious prejudice that they detest medicine, and are fond of hard words.

Of clergymen of divers churches, it is needless and inexpedient to say much. The odium theologicum, a very virulent complaint, has always had its headquarters in the pulpit. Preachers generally take an intensely clerical view of everything, and winding about themselves the net of some hard theological dogmatism, their cry to the thirsting multitudes too often is, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I am of Apollos,' with a change of names and drapery. Dry divinity is one of the most astounding products of the professional mind, when we consider the all-embracing and lofty theme upon which the authors have to dwell. Very recently, we have seen how theological training can interrupt and bend aside the reasoning of a man of science in the *Essay on the Plurality of Worlds*.

Having thus lightly touched upon the three professions which, according to the satirists, thrive on the follies and vices of mankind, it is unnecessary to dwell on other classes presenting various forms of mental perversion peculiar to their respective callings. I merely suggest the pedantry of schoolmasters, the superficial pictures of the little newspaper editor, the hard demonstrative nature of the mathematician, the dreamy unrealism of the poet, the petty huckstering spirit of the retail trader, the unpractical thought of the theorist, and the anti-theoretical hostility of the practical man. There is one, and only one remedy for all—the education of the whole man, intellectually and morally. The threadbare adage of

> A little knowledge is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep, or touch not the Pierian spring,

is eminently false. There is more danger in deep knowledge of one branch of thought exclusively, than in an elementary knowledge of many branches. In our day, division of labour has extended itself to literature and science. Neither does any injury to the dignity of human character necessarily arise from the peculiar devotion of its powers to that division of knowledge to which it is best adapted; but in order to retain spiritual health and symmetry, it is needful to make ourselves acquainted with the labour of other men in other fields, to widen our horizon while we are labouring in our more familiar path. All nature is symmetrical; we live in a realm of order and mutual dependence, and if, disobeying the injunctions of our nature, we unduly develop one faculty, it will be at the cost of others; and our characters will become as unsightly to the eye of contemplation as a hunchback or a cripple to the outward sense.

The spiritual ailments and deformities to which I have alluded are essentially distinct from those brain diseases which depend on physical causes, and are the proper subjects of the science of the physiologist and the skill of the physician. Of mania and idiocy, in their various forms, I have not intended to speak; but it seems to me that those spiritual derangements which manifest themselves in the jaundiced mind, and in party prejudice and professional foibles, and may be comprised in the term wrongheadedness, are no less remediable than physical ills, and may properly be placed in the category of diseases of the soul, which it is not only for our advantage to combat, but our duty. Thus only can we realise the ideal of the poet:

Man the image of his God,
Erect and free.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XI.—RAFAEL IJURRA.

In ill-humour I journeyed along. The hot sun and the dusty road did not improve my temper, ruffled as it was by the unpleasant incident. I was far from satisfied with my first lieutenant, whose conduct was still a mystery. Wheatley could not explain it. Some old enmity, no doubt, both of us believed—some story of wrong and revenge.

No everyday man was Holingsworth, but one altogether of peculiar character and temperament—as unlike him who rode by my side as acid to alkali. The latter was a dashing, cheerful fellow, dressed in half-Mexican costume, who could ride a wild-horse and throw the lazo with any vaquero in the crowd. He was a true Texan, almost by birth; had shared the fortunes of the young republic since the days of Austin; and was never more happy than while engaged in the border warfare, that, with slight intervals, had been carried on against either Mexican or Indian foeman, ever since the lone-star had spread its banner to the breeze. No raw recruit was Wheatley; though young, he was what Texans term an 'old Indian fighter'—a real 'Texas ranger.'

Holingsworth was not a Texan but a Tennessean, though Texas had been for some years his adopted home. It was not the first time he had crossed the Rio Grande. He had been one of the unfortunate Mier expedition—a survivor of that decimated band—afterwards carried in chains to Mexico, and there compelled to work breast-deep in the mud of the great *zancas* that traverse the streets. Such experience might account for the serious, somewhat stern expression that habitually rested upon his countenance, and gave him the character of a 'dark saturnine man.' I have said incidentally that I never saw him smile—never. He spoke seldom, and, as a general thing, only upon matters of duty; but at times, when he fancied himself alone, I have heard him mutter threats, while a convulsive twitching of the muscles, and a mechanical clenching of the fingers accompanied his words, as though he stood in the presence of some deadly foe! I had more than once observed these frenzied outbursts, without knowing aught of their cause. Harding Holingsworth—such was his full name—was a man with whom no one would have desired to take the liberty of asking an explanation of his conduct. His courage and war-prowess were well known among the Texans; but it is idle to add this, since otherwise he could not have stood among them in the capacity of a leader. Men like them, who have the election of their own officers, do not trust their lives to the guidance of either stripling or coward.

Wheatley and I were talking the matter over as we rode along, and endeavouring to account for the strange behaviour of Holingsworth. We had both concluded that the affair had arisen from some old enmity—perhaps connected with the Mier expedition—when accidentally I mentioned the Mexican's name. Up to this moment the Texan lieutenant had not seen Ijurra—having been busy with the cattle upon the other side of the hill—nor had the name been pronounced in his hearing.

'Ijurra?' he exclaimed with a start, reining up and turning to me with an inquiring look.

'Ijurra.'

'*Rafael* Ijurra, do you think?'

'Yes, Rafael—that is the name.'

'A tall, dark fellow, moustached and whiskered?—not ill-looking?'

'Yes; he might answer that description,' I replied.

'If it be the same Rafael Ijurra that used to live at San Antonio, there's more than one Texan would like to raise *his* hair. The same—it must be—there's no two of the name; 'taint likely—no.'

'What do you know of him?'

'Know?—that he's about the most precious scoundrel in all Texas or Mexico either, and that's saying a good deal. Rafael Ijurra? 'Tis he, by thunder! It *can* be nobody else; and Holingsworth—— Ha! now I think of it, it's just the man; and Harding Holingsworth, of all men living, has good reasons to remember *him*.'

'How? Explain?'

The Texan paused for a moment, as if to collect his scattered memories, and then proceeded to detail what he knew of Rafael Ijurra. His account, without the expletives and emphatic ejaculations which adorned it, was substantially as follows:

Rafael Ijurra was by birth a Texan of Mexican race. He had formerly possessed a hacienda near San Antonio de Bexar, with other considerable property, all of which he had spent at play, or otherwise dissipated, so that he had sunk to the status of a professional gambler. Up to the date of the Mier expedition he had passed off as a citizen of Texas, under the new régime, and pretended much patriotic attachment to the young republic. When the Mier adventure was about being organised, Ijurra had influence enough to have himself elected one of its officers. No one suspected his fidelity to the cause. He was one of those who at the halt by Laredo, urged the impudent advance upon Mier; and his presumed knowledge of the country—of which he was a native—gave weight to his counsel. It afterwards proved that his free advice was intended for the benefit of the enemy, with whom he was in secret correspondence.

On the night before the battle, Ijurra was missing. The Texan army was captured after a brave defence, in which they slew more than their own number of the enemy, and, under guard, the remnant was marched off for the capital of Mexico. On the second or third day of their march, what was the astonishment of the Texan prisoners to see Rafael Ijurra *in the uniform of a Mexican officer, and forming part of their escort!* But that their hands were bound, they would have torn him to pieces, so enraged were they at this piece of black treason.

'I was not in that ugly scrape,' continued the lieutenant. 'As luck would have it, I was down with a fever in Brazos bottom, or I guess I should have had to *draw my bean* with the rest of 'em, poor fellows!'

Wheatley's allusion to 'drawing his bean' I understood well enough. All who have ever read the account of this ill-starred adventure will remember, that the

Texans, goaded by ill treatment, rose upon their guard, disarmed, and conquered them! but in their subsequent attempt to escape, ill managed and ill guided, nearly all of them were recaptured, and *decimated*—each tenth man having been shot like a dog! The mode of choosing the victims was by lot, and the black and white beans of Mexico (*frijoles*) were made use of as the expositors of the fatal decrees of destiny. A number of the beans, corresponding to the number of the captives, was placed within an earthen *olla*—there being a black bean for every nine white ones. He who drew the black bean must die! During the drawing of this fearful lottery, there occurred incidents exhibiting character as heroic as has ever been recorded in story.

Read from an eye-witness:

'They all drew their beans with manly dignity and firmness. Some of lighter temper jested over the bloody tragedy. One would say: "*Boys! this beats raffling all to pieces!*" Another: "*Well, this is the tallest gambling-scrape I ever was in.*" Robert Beard, who lay upon the ground exceedingly ill, called his brother William, and said: "Brother, if you draw a black bean, I'll take your place—I want to die!" The brother, with overwhelming anguish, replied: "No, I will keep my own place; *I am stronger, and better able to die than you.*" Major Cocke, when he drew the fatal bean, held it up between his finger and thumb, and, with a smile of contempt, said: "Boys! I told you so: I never failed in my life to draw a prize!" He then coolly added: "They only rob me of forty years." Henry Whaling, one of Cameron's best fighters, as he drew his black bean, said, in a joyous tone: "Well, they don't make much out of me anyhow: I know I've killed twenty-five of them." Then demanding his dinner in a firm voice, he added: "They shall not cheat me out of it!" Saying this, he ate heartily, smoked a cigar, and in twenty minutes after, he had ceased to live! The Mexican fired fifteen shots at Whaling before he expired! Young Torrey, quite a youth, but in spirit a giant, said that he "was perfectly willing to meet his fate—for the glory of his country he had fought, and for her glory he was willing to die." Edward Este spoke of his death with the coolest indifference. Cash said: "Well, they murdered my brother with Colonel Tannin, and they are about to murder me." J. L. Jones said to the interpreter: "Tell the officer to look upon men who are not afraid to die for their country." Captain Eastland behaved with the most patriotic dignity; he desired that his country should not particularly avenge his death. Major Dunham said he was prepared to die for his country. James Ogden, with his usual equanimity of temper, smiled at his fate and said: "I am prepared to meet it." Young Robert W. Harris behaved in the most unflinching manner, and called upon his companions to avenge their murder. * * * *

'They were bound together—their eyes being bandaged—and set upon a log near the wall with their backs towards their executioners. They all begged the officer to shoot them in front, and at a short distance, saying they "*were not afraid to look death in the face.*" This request the Mexican refused; and to make his cruelty as refined as possible, caused the fire to be delivered from a distance, and to be continued for ten or twelve minutes, lacerating and mangling those heroes in a manner too horrible for description.'

When you talk of Thermopylæ, think also of Texas!

'But what of Holingsworth?' I asked.

'Ah! Holingsworth!' replied the lieutenant; '*he has* good cause to remember Ijurra, now I think of it. I shall give the story to you as I heard it;' and my companion proceeded with a relation, which caused the blood to curdle in my veins, as I listened. It fully explained, if it did not palliate, the fierce hatred of the Tennessean towards Rafael Ijurra.

In the Mier expedition, Holingsworth had a brother, who, like himself, was made prisoner. He was a delicate youth, and could ill endure the hardships, much less the barbarous treatment to which the prisoners were exposed during that memorable march. He became reduced to a skeleton, and worse than that, footsore, so that he could no longer endure the pain of his feet and ankles, worn skinless, and charged with the spines of acacias, cactus, and the numerous thorny plants in which the dry soil of Mexico is so prolific. In agony, he fell down upon the road.

Ijurra was in command of the guard; from him Holingsworth's brother begged to be allowed the use of a mule. The youth had known Ijurra at San Antonio, and had even lent him money, which was never returned.

'To your feet, and forward!' was Ijurra's answer.

'I cannot move a step,' said the youth despairingly.

'Cannot! *Carrai!* we shall see whether you can. Here, Pablo,' continued he, addressing himself to one of the soldiers of the guard; 'give this fellow the spur; he is restive!'

The ruffian soldier approached with fixed bayonet, seriously intending to use its point on the poor wayworn invalid! The latter rose with an effort, and made a desperate attempt to keep on; but his resolution again failed him. He could not endure the agonising pain, and after staggering a pace or two, he fell up against a rock.

'I cannot!' he again cried—'I cannot march further: let me die here.'

'Forward! or you *shall* die here,' shouted Ijurra, drawing a pistol from his belt, and cocking it, evidently with the determination to carry out his threat. 'Forward!'

'I cannot,' faintly replied the youth.

'Forward, or I fire!'

'Fire!' cried the young man, throwing open the flaps of his hunting-shirt, and making one last effort to stand erect.

'You are scarce worth a bullet,' said the monster with a sneer; at the same instant he levelled his pistol at the breast of his victim, and fired! When the smoke was blown aside, the body of young Holingsworth was seen lying at the base of the rock, doubled up, dead! A thrill of horror ran through the line of captives. Even their habitually brutal guards were touched by such wanton barbarity. The brother of the youth was not six yards from the spot, tightly bound, and witness of the whole scene! Fancy his feelings at that moment!

'No wonder,' continued the Texan—'no wonder that Harding Holingsworth don't stand upon ceremony as to where and when he may attack Rafael Ijurra. I verily believe that the presence of the commander-in-chief wouldn't restrain him from taking vengeance. It ain't to be wondered at!'

In hopes that my companion might help me to some knowledge of the family at the hacienda, I guided the conversation in that direction.

'And Don Ramon de Vargas is Ijurra's uncle?'

'Sure enough, he must be. Ha! I did not think of that. Don Ramon *is* the uncle. I ought to have known him this morning—that confounded *mezcal* I drank knocked him out of my mind altogether. I have seen the old fellow several times. He used to come to San Antonio once a year, on business with the merchants there. I remember, too, he once brought a daughter with him—splendid girl that, and no mistake! Faith, she crazed half the young fellows in San Antonio, and there were no end of duels about her. She used to ride wild-horses, and fling the lazo like a Comanche. But what am I talking about? That mezcal *has* got into my brains, sure enough. It must have been *her* you chased? Sure as shootin, it was!'

'Probable enough,' I replied in a careless way. My companion little knew the deep, feverish interest his remarks were exciting, or the struggle it was costing me to conceal my emotions. One thing I longed to learn from him—whether any of these amorous duellists had been favoured with the approbation of the lady. I longed to put this question, and yet the absolute dread of the answer restrained my tongue! I remained silent, till the opportunity had passed. The hoof-strokes of half-a-dozen horses coming rapidly from the rear, interrupted the conversation. Without surprise, I saw that it was Holingsworth and the rangers who had been left at the hacienda.

'Captain Warfield!' said the Tennessean as he spurred alongside, 'my conduct no doubt surprises you. I shall be able to explain it to *your* satisfaction when time permits. It's a long story—a painful one to me: you will not require it from me now. This much let me say—for good reason, I hold Rafael Ijurra as my most deadly foe. *I came to Mexico to kill that man;* and by the Eternal! if I don't succeed, I care not who kills *me!*'

'You have *not* then'——

With a feeling of relief, I put the question, for I read the answer in the look of disappointed vengeance that gleamed in the eyes of the Tennessean. I was not permitted to finish the interrogatory; he knew what I was going to ask, and interrupted me with the reply:

'No, no; the villain has escaped; but by'——

The rest of the emphatic vow was inaudible; but the wild glance that flashed from the speaker's eye expressed his deep purpose more plainly than words. The next moment he fell back to his place in the troop, and with his head slightly bent forward, rode on in silence. His dark taciturn features were lit up at intervals by an ominous gleam, shewing that he still brooded over his unavenged wrong.

CHAPTER XII.

THE YELLOW DOMINO.

The next two days I passed in feverish restlessness. Holingsworth's conduct had quite disconcerted my plans. From the concluding sentences of Isolina's note, I had construed an invitation to revisit the hacienda in some more quiet guise than that of a filibustero; but after what had transpired, I could not muster courage to present myself under any pretence. It was not likely I should be welcome—I, the associate—nay, the commander—of the man who had attempted to take the life of a nephew, a cousin! Don Ramon had stipulated for a 'little rudeness;' he had had the full measure of his bargain, and a good deal more. He could not otherwise than think so. Were I to present myself at the hacienda, I could not be else than coldly received—in short, unwelcome.

I thought of apologies and pretexts, but to no purpose. For two days I remained in vacillating indecision; I neither saw nor heard of her who engrossed my thoughts.

* * * *

News from head-quarters! A 'grand ball' to be given in the city!

This bit of gossip fell upon my ear without producing the slightest impression, for I cared little for dancing, and less for grand balls: in earlier youth I had liked both; but not then.

The thing would at once have passed from my thoughts, had it not been for some additional information imparted at the same time, which to me at once rendered the ball attractive.

The information I allude to was, that the ball was got up 'by authority,' and would be upon a grand scale. Its object was political; in other words, it was to be the means of cultivating a friendly intercourse between the conquerors and the conquered—a desirable end. Every effort would be made to bring out the 'native society,' and let it see that we Yankee officers were not such 'barbarians' as they affected to deem, and in reality pronounced us. It was known—so stated my informant—that many families of the Ayankieados would be present; and in order to make it pleasanter for those who feared *proscription*, the ball was to be a masked one—*un bailé de mascara.*

'The Ayankieados are to be there! and she'——

My heart bounded with new hope; and I resolved to make one of the maskers—not that I intended to go in *costume*. In my slender wardrobe was a civilian dress of proper cut, and tolerably well preserved: that would answer my purpose. The ball was to come off on the night following that on which I had word of it. My suspense would be short.

* * * *

The time appeared long enough, but at length the hour arrived, and mounting my good steed, I started off for the city. A brisk ride of two hours brought me on the ground, and I found that I was late enough to be fashionable.

As I entered the ball-room, I saw that most of the company had arrived, and the floor was grouped with dancers. It was evident the affair was a 'success.' There were four or five hundred persons present, nearly half of them ladies. Many were in character costumes, as Tyrolese peasants, Andalusian *majas*, Bavarian broom-girls, Wallachian boyards, Turkish sultanas, and bead-bedecked Indian belles. A greater number were disguised in the ungraceful domino, while not a few appeared in regular evening-dress. Most of the ladies wore masks; some simply hid their faces behind the coquettish *reboso tapado*, while others permitted their charms to be gazed upon. As the night wore on, and an occasional *copita de vino* strengthened the nerves of the company, the uncovered faces became more numerous, and masks got lost or put away.

As for the gentlemen, a number of them also wore masks—some were *en costume*, but uniforms predominated, stamping the ball with a military character. It was not a little singular to see a number of *Mexican* officers mingling in the throng! These were of course prisoners on *parole;* and their more brilliant uniforms, of French patterns, contrasted oddly with the plain blue dresses of their conquerors. The presence of these prisoners, in the full glitter of their gold-lace, was not exactly in good taste; but a moment's reflection convinced one it was not a matter of choice with them. Poor fellows! had they abided by the laws of etiquette, they could not have been there; and no doubt they were as desirous of shaking their legs in the dance as the gayest of their captors. Indeed, in this species of rivalry they far outstripped the latter.

I spent but little time in observing these peculiarities; but one idea engrossed my mind, and that was to find Isolina de Vargas—no easy task amid such a multitude of maskers. Among the uncovered faces she was not. I soon scanned them all, or rather glanced at them. It needed no scanning to recognise hers. If there, she was one of the *mascaritas*, and I addressed myself to a close observation of the *dames en costume* and the dominoes. Hopeless enough appeared the prospect of recognising her, but a little hope sustained me in the reflection, that, being myself uncovered, she might recognise *me.*

When a full half hour had passed away, and my lynx-like surveillance was still unrewarded, this hope died within me; and, what may appear strange, I began to wish she was *not* there. 'If present,' thought I, 'she must have seen me ere this, and to have taken no notice'—— A little pang of chagrin accompanied this reflection.

I flung myself upon a seat, and endeavoured to assume an air of indifference, though I was far from feeling indifferent, and my eyes as before kept eagerly scanning the fair maskers. Now and then, the *tournure* of an ankle—I had seen Isolina's—or the elliptical sweep of a fine figure, inspired me with fresh hope; but as the mascaritas who owned them were near enough to have seen, and yet took no notice of me, I conjectured—in fact, *hoped*—that none of them was she. Indeed, a well-turned ankle is no distinctive mark among the fair *doncellas* of Mexico.

At length, a pair of unusually neat ones, supporting a figure of such superb outlines, that even the ungraceful domino could not conceal them, came under my eyes, and riveted my attention. My heart beat wildly as I gazed. I could not help the belief that the lady in the yellow domino was Isolina de Vargas. She was waltzing with a young dragoon officer; and as they passed me, I rose from my seat, and approached the orbit of the dance, in order to keep them under my eyes. As they passed me a second time, I fancied the lady regarded me through her mask: I fancied I saw her start. I was almost sure it was Isolina!

My feeling was now that of jealousy. The young officer was one of the elegant gentlemen of the service—a professed lady-killer—a fellow, who, notwithstanding his well-known deficiency of brains, was ever welcome among women. She seemed to press closely to him as they whirled around, while her head rested languishingly upon his shoulder. She appeared to be *contented* with her partner. I could scarcely endure the agony of my fancies.

It was a relief to me when the music ceased, and the waltz ended. The circle broke up, and the waltzers scattered in different directions, but my eyes followed only the dragoon officer and his partner. He conducted her to a seat, and then placing himself by her side, the two appeared to engage in an earnest and interesting conversation.

With me politeness was now out of the question. I had grown as jealous as a tiger; and I drew near enough to become a listener. The lowness of the tone in which they conversed precluded the possibility of hearing much of what was said, but I could make out that the spark was 'coaxing' his partner to remove her mask. The voice that replied was surely Isolina's! I could myself have torn the silken screen from her face, through very vexation; but I was saved that indiscretion, for the request of her cavalier seemed to prevail, and the next instant the mask was removed by the lady's own hand. Shade of Erebus! what did I see? She was black—a *negress!* Not black as ebony, but nearly so; with thick lips, high cheek-bones, and a row of short 'kinky' curls dangling over the arch of her glistening forehead!

My astonishment, though perhaps of a more agreeable kind, was not greater than that of the dragoon lieutenant, who, by the way, was also a full-blooded 'southerner.' At sight of his partner's face he started, as if a six-pound shot had winded him; and after a few half-muttered excuses, he rose with an air of extreme *gaucherie*, and hurrying off, hid himself behind the crowd!

The 'coloured lady,' mortified—as I presumed she must be—hastily readjusted her mask, and rising from her seat, glided away from the scene of her humiliation. I gazed after her with a mingled feeling of curiosity and pity; I saw her pass out of the door alone, evidently with the intention of leaving the ball. I fancied she had departed, as her domino, conspicuous by its bright yellow colour, was no more seen among the maskers.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BLUE DOMINO.

Thus disappointed, I gave up all hope of meeting her for whose sake I had come to the ball. She was either *not* there, or did not wish to be recognised, even by *me*. The latter supposition was the more bitter of the two; and goaded by it and one or two other uncongenial thoughts, I paid frequent visits to the 'refreshment-room,' where wine flowed freely. A cup or two drove the *one idea* out of my mind; and after a while, I grew more companionable, and determined to enjoy myself like others around me. I had not danced as yet, but the wine soon got to my toes as well as into my head; and I resolved to put myself in motion with the first partner that offered.

I soon found one—a blue domino—that came right in my way, as if the fates had determined we should dance together. The lady was '*not* engaged for the next;' she would be 'most happy.'

This, by the way, was said in *French*, which would have taken me by surprise, had I not known that there were many French people living in C——, as in all the large cities of Mexico. They are usually jewellers, dentists, milliners, or other artisans of that class, who drive a lucrative trade among the luxury-loving *Mexicanas*. To know there were French people in the place, was to be certain you would find them at the ball; and there were they, numbers of them, pirouetting about, and comporting themselves with the gay *insouciance* characteristic of their nation. I was not surprised, then, when my blue domino addressed me in French.

'A French *modiste!*' conjectured I, as soon as she spoke.

Milliner or no, it mattered not to me; I wanted a dancing partner; and after another phrase or two in the same sweet tongue, away went she and I in the curving whirl of a waltz.

After sailing once round the room, I had two quite new and distinct impressions upon my mind: the first, that I had a partner *who could waltz*, a thing not to be met with every day. My blue domino seemed to have no feet under her, but floated around me as if borne upon the air! For the moment, I fancied myself in Ranelagh or Mabille! My other impression was, that my arm encircled as pretty a waist as ever was clasped by a lover. There was a pleasing rotundity about it, combined with a general symmetry of form and serpentine yieldiness of movement, that rendered dancing with such a partner both easy and delightful. My observation at the moment was, that if the face of the modiste bore any sort of proportion to her figure, she needed not have come so far from France to push her fortune.

With such a partner I could not otherwise than waltz well; and never better than upon that occasion. We were soon under the observation of the company, and became the cynosure of a circle. This I did not relish, and drawing my blue domino to one side, we waltzed towards a seat, into which I handed her with the usual polite expression of thanks.

This seat was in a little recess or blind window, where two persons might freely converse without fear of an eaves-dropper. I had no desire to run away from a partner who danced so well, though she were a modiste. There was room for two upon the bench, and I asked permission to sit beside her.

'Oh, certainly,' was the frank reply.

'And will you permit me to remain with you till the music recommences?'

'If you desire it.'

'And dance with you again?'

'With pleasure, monsieur, if it suit your convenience. But is there no other who claims you as a partner?—no other in this assemblage you would prefer?'

'Not one, I assure you. You are the only one present with whom I care to dance.'

As I said this I thought I perceived a slight movement, that indicated some emotion.

'It was a gallant speech, and the modiste is pleased with the compliment,' thought I.

Her reply:

'It flatters me, sir, that you prefer my company to that of the many splendid beauties who are in this saloon; though it might gratify me still more *if you knew who I am.*'

The last clause was uttered with an emphasis, and followed by a sigh!

'Poor girl!' thought I, 'she fancies that I mistake her for some grand dame—that if I knew her real position, her humble avocation, I should no longer care to dance with her. In that she is mistaken. I make no distinction between a milliner and a marchioness, especially in a ball-room. There, grace and beauty alone guide to preference.'

After giving way to some such reflections, I replied:

'It is my regret, mam'selle, not to have the happiness of knowing you, and it is not possible I ever may, unless you will have the goodness to remove your mask.'

'Ah! monsieur, what you ask is impossible.'

'Impossible! and why, may I know?'

'Because, were you to see my face, I should not have you for my partner in the next dance; and to say the truth, I should regret that, since you waltz so admirably.'

'Oh! refusal and flattery in the same breath! No, mam'selle, I am sure *your* face will never be the means of your losing a partner. Come! let me beg of you to remove that envious counterfeit. Let us converse freely face to face. *I* am not masked, as you see.'

'In truth, sir, you have no reason to hide your face, which is more than I can say for many other men in this room.'

'Quick-witted milliner,' thought I. 'Bravo, Ranelagh! Vive la Mabille!'

'Thanks, amiable masker!' I replied. 'But you are too generous: you flatter me'——

'It is worth while,' rejoined she, interrupting me; 'it improves your cheek: blushes become you, ha, ha, ha!'

'The deuce!' I ejaculated half aloud, 'this *dame du Boulevard* is laughing at me!'

'But what *are* you?' she continued, suddenly changing her tone. 'You are not a Mexican? Are you soldier or civilian?'

'What would you take me for?'

'A poet, from your pale face, but more from the manner in which I have heard you sigh.'

'I have not sighed since we sat down.'

'No—but before we sat down.'

'What! in the dance?'

'No—before the dance.'

'Ha! then you observed me before?'

'O yes; your plain dress rendered you conspicuous among so many uniforms; besides your manner'——

'What manner?' I asked with some degree of confusion, fearing that in my search after Isolina I had committed some stupid piece of left-handedness.

'Your abstraction; and, by the way, had you not a little *penchant* for a yellow domino?'

'A yellow domino?' repeated I, raising my hand to my head, as though it cost me an effort to remember it—'a yellow domino?'

'Ay, ay—a ye-ll-ow dom-in-o,' rejoined my companion with sarcastic emphasis—'a yellow domino, who waltzed with a young officer—not bad-looking, by the way.'

'Ah! I think I *do* remember'——

'Well, I think you *ought*,' rejoined my tormentor, 'and well too: you took sufficient pains to *observe*.'

'Ah—aw—yes,' stammered I.

'I thought you were conning verses to her, and as you had not the advantage of *seeing her face*, were making them to her feet!'

'Ha, ha!—what an idea of yours, mad'm'selle!'

'In the end, she was not ungenerous—she let you see the face?'

'The devil!' exclaimed I starting; 'you saw the *dénouement* then?'

'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed she; 'of course I saw the dénouement, ha, ha!—*drole*, wasn't it?'

'Very,' replied I, not much relishing the joke, but endeavouring to join my companion in the laugh.

'How silly the spark looked? ha, ha!'

'Very silly indeed—ha, ha, ha!'

'And how disappointed'——

'Eh?'

'How disappointed *you* looked, monsieur.'

'Oh—ah—I—no—I assure you—I had no interest in the affair. I was not *disappointed*—at least not as you imagine.'

'Ah!'

'The feeling uppermost in my mind was *pity*—pity for the poor girl.'

'And you really *did* pity her?'

This question was put with an earnestness that sounded somewhat strange at the moment.

'I really did. The creature seemed so mortified'——

'She seemed mortified, did she?'

'Of course. She left the room immediately after, and has not returned since. No doubt she has gone home, poor devil!'

'Poor devil! Is that the extent of your pity?'

'Well, after all, it must be confessed she was a superb deception: a finer dancer I never saw—I beg pardon, I except my present partner—a good foot, an elegant figure, and then to turn out'——

'What?'

'*Una negrilla!*'

'I fear, monsieur, you Americans are not very gallant towards the ladies of colour. It is different here in Mexico, which you term *despotic*.'

I felt the rebuke.

'To change the subject,' continued she; 'are you *not* a poet?'

'I do not deserve the name of poet, yet I will not deny that I have made verses.'

'I thought as much. What an instinct I have! O that I could prevail upon you to write some verses to me!'

'What! without knowing either your name or having looked upon your face. Mam'selle, I must at least see the features I am called upon to praise.'

'Ah, monsieur, you little know: were I to unmask those features, I should stand but a poor chance of getting the verses. My plain face would counteract all your poetic inspirations.'

'Shade of Lucretia! this is no needlewoman, though dealing in weapons quite as sharp. Modiste, indeed! I have been labouring under a mistake. This is some *dame spirituelle*, some grand lady.'

I had now grown more than curious to look upon the face of my companion. Her conversation had won me: a woman who could talk so, I fancied, could not be ill-looking. Such an enchanting spirit could not be hidden behind a plain face; besides, there was the gracefulness of form, the small, gloved hand, the dainty foot and ankle demonstrated in the dance, a voice that rang like music, and the flash of a superb eye, which I could perceive even through the mask. Beyond a doubt, she was beautiful.

'Lady!' I said, speaking with more earnestness than ever, 'I entreat you to unmask yourself. Were it not in a ball-room, I should beg the favour upon my knees.'

'And were I to grant it, you could hardly rise soon enough, and pronounce your lukewarm leave-taking. Ha, monsieur! think of the yellow domino!'

'Mam'selle, you take pleasure in mortifying me. Do you deem me capable of such fickleness? Suppose for a moment you are not what the world calls beautiful, you could not, by removing your mask, also strip yourself of the attractions of your conversation—of that voice that thrills through my heart—of that grace exhibited in your every movement! With such endowments, how could a woman appear ill-looking? If your face was even as black as hers of the yellow domino, I verily believe I could not perceive its darkness.'

'Ha, ha, ha! take care what you say, monsieur. I presume you are not more indulgent than the rest of your sex; and well know I that, with you men, ugliness is the greatest crime of a woman.'

'I am different, I swear'——

'Do not perjure yourself, as you will if I but remove my mask. I tell you, sir, that in spite of all the fine qualities you imagine me to possess, I am a vision that would horrify you to look upon.'

'Impossible!—your form, your grace, your voice. Oh, unmask! I accept every consequence for the favour I ask.'

'Then be it as you wish; but I shall not be the means of punishing you. Receive from your own hands the chastisement of your curiosity.'

'You permit me, then? Thanks, mam'selle, thanks! It is fastened behind: yes, the knot is here—Now I have it—so—so'—

With trembling fingers, I undid the string, and pulled off the piece of taffety. Shade of Sheba! what did I see?

The mask fell from my fingers, as though it had been iron at a cherry heat. Astonishment caused me to drop it; rather say horror—horror at beholding the face underneath—the *face of the yellow domino!* Yes, there was the same negress with her thick lips, high cheek-bones, and the little well-oiled kinks hanging like corkscrews over her temples!

I knew not either what to say or do; my gallantry was clean gone; and although I resumed my seat, I remained perfectly dumb. Had I looked in a mirror at that moment, I should certainly have beheld the face of a fool.

My companion, who seemed to have made up her mind to such a result, instead of being mortified, burst into a loud fit of laughter, at the same time crying out in a tone of raillery: 'Now, Monsieur le Poète, does my face inspire you? When may I expect the verses? To-morrow? Soon? Never? Ah! monsieur, I fear you are not more gallant to us poor "ladies ob colour" than your countryman the lieutenant. Ha, ha, ha!'

I was too much ashamed of my own conduct, and too deeply wounded by her reproach, to make reply. Fortunately, her continued laughter offered me an opportunity to mutter some broken phrases, accompanied by very clumsy gestures, and thus take myself off. Certainly, in all my life, I never made a more awkward adieu. I walked, or rather *stole*, towards the entrance, determined to leave the ball-room, and gallop home. On reaching the door, my curiosity grew stronger than my shame; and I resolved to take a parting look at this singular Ethiopian. The blue domino, still within the niche, caught my eye at once; but on looking up to the face—gracious Heaven! *it was Isolina's!*

I stood as if turned into stone. My gaze was fixed upon her face, and I could not take it off. She was looking at me; but, oh! the expression with which those eyes regarded me! That was a glance to be remembered for life. She no longer laughed, but her proud lip seemed to curl with a sarcastic smile, as of scorn!

I hesitated whether to return and apologise. But no; it was too late. I could have fallen upon my knees, and begged forgiveness. It was too late. I should only subject myself to further ridicule from that capricious spirit.

Perhaps my look of remorse had more effect than words. I thought her expression changed; her glance became more tender, as if inviting me back! Perhaps——

At this moment, a man approached, and, without much ceremony, seated himself by her side. His face was towards me—I recognised Ijurra!

They converse. Is it of *me?* Is it of ——? If so, he will laugh. A world to see that man laugh, and know it is at *me*. If he do, I shall soon cast off the load that is crushing my heart!

He laughs not—not even a smile is traceable on his sombre features. She has not told him, and well for him she has not. Prudence, perchance, restrains her tongue; she might guess the result.

They are on their feet again; she masks. Ijurra leads her to the dance; they front to each other; they whirl away—away: they are lost among the maskers!

* * * *

'Some wine, mozo!'

A deep long draught, a few seconds spent in buckling on my sword, a few more in reaching the gate, one spring, and my saddled steed was under me.

I rode with desperate heart and hot head; but the cool night-air, the motion of my horse, and his proud spirit mingling with mine, gave me relief, and I felt calmer. On reaching the rancheria, I found my lieutenants still up, eating their rudely cooked supper. As my appetite was roused, I joined them at their meal; and their friendly converse restored for the time my spirit's equanimity.

FATHER MATHEW.

On Tuesday, the 9th December 1856, every vessel lying in Cork Harbour and river appeared with its colours half-mast high, and nearly every shop in the city had its shutters partially closed; for, on the previous day, Father Mathew, the beloved Apostle of Temperance, breathed his last at Queenstown. The local journals, Conservative and Radical, Whig and Tory, merging for once all points of sectarian difference, united in lamentations for a great and good man, and in bearing tribute to his worth. From their columns, and from other sources, but principally from an ably written article which appeared in the *Cork Examiner*, we shall compile a short biographical sketch of one of the most remarkable men of the age.

Theobald Mathew was born at Thomastown, in the county Tipperary, on the 10th of October 1790. The Mathews were originally an old English Catholic family, some branches of which came over to Ireland with Cromwell. One of this family is mentioned by Swift as 'the grand George Mathew,' who was remarkable for the extent and splendour of his hospitality. It is stated, that a gentleman who had made a wager that he would compel him to break a rule of his house, which was, never to ask the name of any one who chose to offer himself as a guest, lost his bet, notwithstanding that he stayed three weeks in the house, and conducted himself with as much impertinence as he could possibly assume.

The subject of this sketch was left with eight brothers and sisters, an orphan, at a very early age. Lady Elizabeth Mathew, a relative of his father, took him under her care, and sent him, at the age of thirteen, to the Roman Catholic college, Kilkenny. There he continued for some years; and having evinced a desire to enter the priesthood, his theological studies were completed, partly in Spain, and partly at Maynooth. At the age of twenty-three he was ordained, and after ministering for a brief period in Kilkenny, he was transferred to the house of the Capuchin order in Cork.

His conduct as a priest was exemplary. Not content with the ordinary labours attached to his office, he hired an old store next his chapel, which he converted into schools for the female children of his parish. At one period, no less than 500 children were attending these schools. In this admirable effort he was seconded by a number of pious and charitable ladies of the city. In the year 1832, Asiatic cholera desolated Cork. Night and morning, Father Mathew was to be seen penetrating the miserable lanes of the most miserable parish in Cork, that of St Nicholas, seeking out subjects for the shelter of the hospital, and administering to them physical relief as well as spiritual consolation. During this dreadful time, his residence used to be besieged by claimants on his bounty, and none ever left it unaided or unanswered. On one occasion his secretary said to him: 'Sir, this is the last shilling we have.' His reply was: 'Give it, and let us trust to God.'

Great inconvenience was experienced by the poor of the city from the high price charged for burial-fees. In order to remedy this evil, Father Mathew took a piece of ground, known as the 'Botanic Gardens,' in the neighbourhood of the city, and converted it into a public burying-ground, a large portion of it being devoted gratuitously to the use of the poor. This, which is now one of the most beautiful cemeteries in these countries, afforded a most necessary accommodation during that cholera visitation, as well as during the terrible years of the famine-fever.

About this time, what may be called the public career of Father Mathew commenced. Hitherto, though his name was known far and wide throughout the country as the good and benevolent priest, yet the origin of his reputation lay almost entirely within the strict duties of his calling. He was now about to enter upon a course of exertion, which brought him a fame and a glory that cannot perish, but which at the same time entailed upon him endless troubles and vexations, beneath which his strong spirit eventually bowed, and to which may in no small degree be attributed his almost premature decay.

About the year 1830, a number of Cork gentlemen, including a Protestant clergyman, and some members of the Presbyterian body and of the Society of Friends, got up an association for the spread of temperance principles. The vice of intoxication had increased at that period to a fearful extent. The advance of education, and the consequently enlarged power of public opinion, had diminished its prevalence amongst the higher classes; but the poor had no such check upon their actions, and this deadly plague raged fearfully.

It was in vain that the newly formed society sought to counteract it: the good intentions of its members were recognised, but they had no influence over the people, and their society continued to exist for several years without having made any sensible advance. At length, in the month of April 1838, Father Mathew was induced to lend it his aid, and in a very brief period the power of his name was felt. Thousands flocked to his feet, to receive a pledge binding them to self-denial, of a character hitherto untried. Many drunkards joined it from a pure desire to reform, many from the excellent motive of wishing to afford a good example to their frailer brethren; very many from pure admiration of the good man who was now confessedly at the head of the movement; and vast numbers, who went to the meetings from motives of curiosity, in an enthusiastic impulse also joined. Thus the tide rolled from south to north, and west to east, until it spread over the entire country. Wherever Father Mathew went, he was hailed with delight and enthusiasm, and his progress was a kind of ovation rather than a journey of advocacy.

Miss Edgeworth thus describes the effects of the temperance movement in her own neighbourhood: 'In our village of Edgeworthstown, the whisky-selling has diminished since the "pledge" has been taken, within the last two years, so as to leave the public-houses empty, and to oblige the landlord to lower house-rent considerably. This we know to our pecuniary loss—I need not add, to our moral satisfaction. The appearance of the people, their quiet demeanour at markets and fairs, has wonderfully improved in general; and to the knowledge of this family, many notorious drinkers, and some, as it was thought, confirmed drunkards, have been completely reformed by taking the pledge. They have become able and willing to work, and take care of their business; are decently clothed, and healthy and happy, and now make their wives and children healthy and happy, instead of, as before the reformation, miserable and heart-broken. Very few, scarcely any instances of breaking the pledge have as yet come to our knowledge; but some have occurred. The culprits have been completely shunned and disgraced, so that they are awful warnings to others. . . . . Beyond all calculations, beyond all the precedents of experience, and all examples from the past, and all analogy, this wonderful crusade against the bad habits of nations, the bad habits and sensual tastes of individuals, has succeeded and lasted for about two years.'

The effect produced upon the sale of intoxicating drinks in Ireland was extraordinary. Distilleries and public-houses in numbers were closed. Personally, indeed, Father Mathew was a pecuniary sufferer, as he caused a large and flourishing distillery which belonged to his brother to be shut up, shortly after his undertaking the temperance advocacy.

The wonderful reformation of which he was the apostle in this country, soon made the name of Father Mathew famous far beyond the limits of his own country, and he soon became an object of attraction to all the sight-seers who visited Cork. Their astonishment was great to find this man, whose reputation had reached them in remote lands, whose extraordinary munificence was scarcely less remarkable than his reformatory zeal, dwelling in an unpretending house in an obscure corner of the city. They saw that his levées were chiefly of the poor; among whom he went as a father and a friend, distributing with soft caressing manner, and in words of kindness that came fresh from the heart, his advice and counsel. They could see also that he had won the affections of every class, and that polemical animosity did not exist towards him.

In the year 1843, Father Mathew made a tour through England and Scotland, where he was received with a cordiality, and even with an enthusiasm which shewed how completely respect for his character and appreciation of his motives had overcome the prejudice against his profession as a Roman Catholic clergyman. This feeling was substantially evinced on a subsequent occasion, when, owing to the largeness of his charities, he became so far involved in pecuniary difficulties, that he was actually arrested for debt in Dublin. On that occasion, the generous English people subscribed largely to relieve him from his embarrassments, and on the recommendation of Sir Robert Peel, a pension of L.300 a year was granted him by the Queen. All this, however, merely went to satisfy the claims of his creditors, a sufficient answer to the trumpery charge which at one time was made, and which he even had to condescend to answer, that he was driving a trade in medals, and amassing wealth by means of the temperance movement! Had he sought riches, indeed, they might have been his; but as his heart was loving, his hand was open. Money he valued only as the means of assisting others, and the man who was one of the wonders of the age, and a benefactor to all who needed his assistance, has died himself a dependent, and not possessed of a shilling he could term his own.

The awful years of 1847 and 1848 afforded another opportunity for exhibiting the virtues of Father Mathew's character. About that period he received an invitation of a most flattering nature to visit Rome.

This he had always longed to do; but during the existence of the terrible ordeal through which his countrymen were then passing, he felt that his place was amongst them, and he remained in the plague-stricken city, distributing alms, organising committees of relief, and bringing the whole force of his powerful intellect to bear on the business of charity. The estimation in which his name was held was partly instrumental in obtaining from the American people their gift of corn, when disarming their ships-of-war: they crammed their magazines with food for the relief of the stricken country.

In the year 1849, Father Mathew was prevailed upon to visit the United States, in order to gratify the wishes of the millions of Irish who have made them their home. His reception, on his arrival at New York, was enthusiastic. Addresses from all quarters poured upon him; deputations from all the great cities of the States pressed to his presence, and he was fêted as an honoured guest in the White House. The restless disposition of the people kept him continually giving receptions, holding levées, and receiving demonstrations, until the mingled fatigue and excitement caused by the events of his American career, brought upon him two attacks of a disease from which he had suffered once before—paralysis. After recovering partially from the effects of the latter of these, he was advised to try the medicinal springs in the backwoods of Arkansas; and, accordingly, he spent the month of September in a log-hut in that remote locality, eight miles distant from any other human habitation. There he had no attendant but the old woman who owned the hut, and her son; and he was obliged to live upon Indian corn and the produce of the son's gun and fishing-net.

It was an interesting sight, we have been told, to see this pious ecclesiastic, who, wherever he went, had been saluted by the acclamations of thousands, offering up his act of adoration amidst the vast solitude of the pine-woods, the turf being his fragrant shrine, and his temple the great arch of God.

While in America, he administered the pledge to vast numbers of the Irish people resident there; and his departure from it was witnessed by all classes with a regret proportioned to their delight at his arrival.

We may here quote a sketch which Kohl, the German traveller, gives of him: 'I was formally introduced to the reverend chairman (at a temperance meeting), who presented me to Father Mathew. He is decidedly a man of distinguished appearance, and I was not long in comprehending the influence which it was in his power to exercise over the people. The multitude require a handsome and imposing person in the individual who is to lead them; and Father Mathew is unquestionably handsome. He is not tall; he is about the same height and figure as Napoleon, and is throughout well built and well proportioned. His countenance is fresh, and beaming with health. His movements and address are simple and unaffected; and, altogether, he has something about him that wins the good-will of those he addresses. His features are regular, and full of noble expression of mildness and indomitable firmness. His eyes are large; his forehead straight, high, and commanding; and his nose—a part of the face which in some expresses such intense vulgarity, and in others so much nobleness and delicacy—is particularly handsome, though somewhat aquiline. His mouth is small and well proportioned; and his chin round, projecting, firm, and large, like Napoleon's.'

From the time of Father Mathew's return from America, he never recovered his health. By this time, too, the movement to which he had devoted the energies of his life had suffered from various causes. The famine years, in depriving the people of all physical comforts, had induced moral degradation; and on his return, Father Mathew had the misery of beholding the great fabric to which he had devoted almost superhuman energies, apparently crumbling away. The enthusiasm for total abstinence had in a great degree departed, and the numbers on the roll of teetotallers had diminished largely. But the effects of the movement had not passed away, and are still to be seen in the improved habits of the people, where they remain a standing monument to the man who alone could have effected that wonderful reformation.

As a proof of the high esteem in which he was held by the Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese, we may mention that, on the death of the Right Rev. Dr Murphy in 1847, he was returned by them *Dignissimus* to succeed him in the see of Cork. The choice of the pope, however, fell on another. Father Mathew was set aside, either because the temperance movement was of too secular a character, or because he was in receipt of a pension from the English government, or because he had been arrested for debt; any of which, perhaps, was considered a canonical objection.

In 1852, Father Mathew, by the advice of his physicians, visited Madeira; but he returned home only more disabled in health. For four years he lingered on; but though weak and ill, he preserved the same winning sweetness of manner, the same thoughtful kindness for his friends.

He took up his abode at Lehena, the residence of his brother, Mr Charles Mathew, situated at a short distance from Cork. There, the gate was surrounded with poor applicants for the reception of the pledge, for alms, or spiritual aid. These he still received with the same kindness as when in the fulness of his health and strength. Towards the close of last summer, he went to reside in Queenstown, where he continued gradually failing in health, until on Tuesday, the 2d of December, he was attacked with a sixth paralytic stroke. He lingered, quite conscious of his approaching end, until the following Monday, when, apparently without suffering, he breathed his last.

On Wednesday his remains were brought from Queenstown to the chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity, which he had founded in Cork; and on Friday he was interred, with every possible demonstration of public respect and private affection.

Despite of the drenching rain which fell during the morning, crowds thronged the vicinity of the chapel. 'Father Mathew,' one man remarked, 'had stood bareheaded for many a long hour, trying to get us to give up the drink.' And there the assemblage, estimated at 30,000 persons, continued until the mortuary ceremonial within the chapel had concluded, and the long mournful procession issuing from the central porch, bore the mortal remains of its founder to the tomb in the centre of that cemetery which stands another monument of his benevolent exertions. As the coffin came in sight, one deep, sorrowing, heart-felt moan escaped from the immense multitude, swelling, erelong, into loud wailing and lamentation—no matter-of-course *keening*, but the expression of sincere sorrow. The shops in the city were all closed, and during the morning, business was completely suspended.

Theobald Mathew, his enemies themselves being judges, was a great philanthropist, and during many years a true benefactor to his country. May the 'good' that he has done not *all* be 'interred with his bones.' May poor Ireland once more shake off the thraldom of 'strong drink;' and by so doing, achieve for herself a greater deliverance, a truer freedom, than demagogue ever promised, or insurgent fought to gain.

In any but an *Irish* sketch, it would seem incongruous to conclude with an anecdote, which, however, is so genuine and so characteristic, that we cannot withhold it from our readers.

The proprietor of a large public-house in Cork was observed on the day of the funeral to be very demonstrative in his outward manifestations of mourning.

Not only did he appear in a suit of black with a long crape hat-band, but his shutters were kept strictly closed; not a chink was allowed to betray the nature of the liquid merchandise within.

'How is it,' asked a gentleman, 'that *you* are grieving for Father Mathew's death? I should have thought you would rather have rejoiced at it.'

'Ah, yer honour,' said the man, with that indescribable wink of mingled cunning and drollery which none but an Irish eye can contrive to execute—'sure I wouldn't sell a drop o' whisky to-night, if I didn't put up my shutters to-day!'

LAY-MONKS.

Among the favourite standard creations which the British public delights in having periodically served up for its delectation, must be reckoned the original old-established monk. This traditional personage, the *type moine*, as the French would say, may be said to flourish still, a thriving evergreen; and his appearance on the stage or in the novel scarcely ever fails to call forth the enthusiasm of every British heart. When Father Francis or Father Philip comes on the scene, bearing all his traditional marks and tokens about him, it is pleasant to see how he is at once recognised and greeted as an old acquaintance. The good man's shining poll, his person singularly developed about the epigastric region, his gait, which is slightly unsteady; in short, all the points belonging to the tradition are welcomed by the spectators as things familiar to them and their sires for generations back. We might almost fancy the holy men were to be seen every day in our streets, or were part of the 'institutions' of the country.

At the end of last century, the stage swarmed with monks, the horizon was clouded with cowls and sad-coloured frocks—Sheridan and other ingenious mechanists supplying the article as wanted. The former fashioned a famous friar, to be found in the *Duenna;* and even through the sulphur and blue fire of the *Castle Spectre*, we catch a glimpse of a portly figure, who is facetiously accused of bearing about with him a 'tremendous tomb of fish, flesh, and fowl.'

Whence, then, this intimate knowledge of monk-physiology, this deep insight into monachologia? Has the tradition of Robin Hood's merry friar, or of the holy clerk of Copmanhurst, been so affectionately preserved that we have come to know their ways and habits, as it were by heart? Perhaps it is that the Briton respects and appreciates such sleek evidence of good cheer, although impregnated with the papistical leaven. And this mention of good cheer brings us to another scene, where cowl and frock enjoy high popularity. Those who have assisted at symposia fast and furious where convivial chanting has been in vogue, may perhaps recollect some ancient of the party beginning to quaver about the sanctity and other perfections of a certain 'Ho-ho-ho-ly Friar!' Alack! that lay extends unto many verses, and convivial generosity delights in full measure. 'Chorus, if you please, gentlemen,' sings our ancient: instant signal for roar of voices in divers vinous keys, all asseverating that the late reverend was '*such* a Ho-ho-ho-ly Friar!' If another elder favour, as it is called, the company with a song, he will most likely select *The Friar of Orders Gray* or *The Monks of Old;* but there is an antique simplicity about the first-named chorus which insures for it a more enduring popularity.

With this strong faith in cloistral joviality, it is not surprising that certain merry spirits should have conceived the idea of assuming for the nonce the likeness of these monks of old, hoping that by this means the ancient monastic spirit would be revived in them once more. In the teeth of the well-established maxim, that the cowl maketh not the monk, they fancied that by adopting the garb, their revels would acquire that traditional flavour which was supposed to be found in perfection at the monkish board. Accordingly, we find divers of these pseudo-monastic establishments flourishing at different periods during the last century; wherein, it must be confessed, the rule of St Dominic or St Benedict had but little part; and to the more important of these we now purpose inviting the reader's attention; and first for Medmenham Abbey and the order of 'Franciscans.'

The distinction of being the most notorious man of pleasure of his day belongs without dispute to Sir Francis Dashwood, Baronet. About the middle of last century, he first began his eccentric career, and, like a noble marquis of our own time, continued for many years to trouble the repose of the good lieges of the city. But soon the pleasing excitement of beating watchmen and abducting actresses began to pall upon him—even street-encounters were found to have lost their charm—and he began to cast about for some new and untried sphere of action. Accordingly, Jack Wilkes and some other famous 'bloods' were called into council; and it was agreed that, under existing circumstances, the only course open was to found an order of a penitential character, the members whereof should bear the name of Franciscans, after their noble founder.

An ancient mansion, beautifully situated on the banks of the Thames, was chosen as the residence of the new institute. Surrounded with hanging woods and moss-grown slopes, far away from the busy hum of men, it was in every way suited for the enjoyment of a calm and tranquil solitude. In days of old it had belonged to the Cistercian monks; but the holy walls were now destined to witness very different scenes. In the following summer, the prior, Sir Francis, with the rest of the brethren, including Mr John Wilkes, Mr Paul Whitehead, Sir Thomas Stapleton, and others remarkable for devotion and piety, repaired to the convent, and the 'exercises,' or rather the reign of riot, forthwith commenced. Every succeeding summer the same scenes were repeated; and Medmenham Abbey and its inmates became the wonder and the scandal of the country.

In *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea*, a now obsolete novel, written by an Irishman of that day, may be found a detailed account of the abbey and its inhabitants. At the secret rites of the chapter-room, none save the twelve brethren were permitted to be present. With such arcana *we* have no concern; but without coveting so edifying a prospect, there was enough left to puzzle and amuse the inquiring visitor.

Over the principal entrance was to be seen the famous Rabelaisian maxim: 'Fay ce que vouldras'—an encouraging precept, religiously observed. A little further on, another comforting motto met the eye: 'Aude, hospes, contemnere opes.' In the room where the brethren took their meals, was a statue of Harpocrates, the Egyptian god of silence, together with another of the *female* goddess of the same virtue. Thus was conveyed a hint to both sexes. There were beautiful gardens, laid out with consummate taste, ornamented with statues and fountains; there were fragrant groves, 'cool grot, and mossy cells;' while classical inscriptions, in harmony with the scene, met the eye at every turn.

With such attractions, it was no wonder that conventual life was found agreeable. Accordingly, for many summers did holy Abbot Francis and his twelve merry monks repair regularly to the favoured spot. But there was a change impending. To the astonishment of everybody, and most likely to his own, Sir Francis Dashwood, the baronet, found himself on a sudden transformed into a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and into a peer of the realm by the style and title of Lord le Despencer. Stranger still, he was discovered to have actually built a church near his house! Jack Wilkes, too, had got deep into his *North Briton* troubles, and was battling hard with government and the Commons. Lord Sandwich, whose morals were about on a par with those of the late prior, affected to have been shocked with some of Mr Wilkes's verses, and had thought it his duty, as First Lord of the Admiralty, to bring their author to justice. These were so many interruptions to the calm tranquillity of the abbey. Poor Brother Whitehead, better known by the sobriquet of 'Paul the Aged,' succumbed at last to the weight of years, and was laid in Sir Francis's garden with strange pomp and fantastic ceremonies. A funeral urn was set up over him by his sorrowing patron. In this way the members dropped off, and the meetings came gradually to be given up.

The year 1809 witnessed the establishment of a new order at Newstead Abbey, under the auspices of the youthful Lord Byron. This was not quite so systematic or so earnest an effort as that of the Medmenham ascetics. The noble prior was then scarcely twenty-one, an age scarcely suited to so important a charge; but he had an admirable coadjutor in Charles Skinner Mathews, the very beau-ideal of good fellowship, who discharged his duties to perfection. He too, like 'aged Paul,' was soon swept away. It is impossible to look at the scanty memorials left to us of his wit and genius, and not feel convinced that he would have turned out a brilliant spirit of the Sheridan order.

The 'exercises' and general distribution of the day may be best described in his own words: 'For breakfast we had no set hour, but each suited his own convenience—everything remaining on the table till the whole party had done; though had one wished to breakfast at the early hour of ten, he would have been rather lucky to find any of the servants up. Our average hour of rising was one. I, who generally got up between eleven and twelve, was always—even when an invalid—the first of the party, and was esteemed a prodigy of early rising. It was frequently past two before the breakfast-party broke up. Then, for the amusement of the morning, there were reading, fencing, single-stick, or shuttle-cock, in the great room; practising with pistols in the hall; walking, riding, cricket, sailing on the lake, playing with the bear, or teasing the wolf. Between seven and eight we dined; and our evening lasted from that time till one, two, or three in the morning. The evening diversions may be easily conceived.'

This irregular existence Lord Byron seems to have enjoyed amazingly, and in his letters dwells with pleasure on the time when they all used 'to sit up late in our friary, drinking claret, champagne, and what not out of the *skull-cup* and all sorts of glasses, and buffooning all round the house in our conventual garments.' These 'conventual garments' were strictly canonical in shape and hue, though procured through the unsanctified medium of a masquerade warehouse, and consisted of a black frock with a cowl of the same colour. In this sombre garb would the brethren assemble in chapter, when the grim skull-cup in its silver mountings would be filled with choice Burgundy, and sent on its rounds. At the same solemn moment, would voices be uplifted, and the mystic skull-song chanted:

Start not, nor deem my spirit fled!
In me behold the only skull
From which—unlike a living head—
Whatever flows is never dull.

The ghostly monk who was supposed to flit about the ruined galleries of the old abbey, might be supposed to stay awhile his midnight wanderings, and frown angrily on this mockery of his ancient functions.

For another illustration of this eccentric taste for playing at monks, we must cross over into the sister-island, and go back to the close of last century, and the last days of the Irish Parliament. At that most brilliant period of Irish history, more wit and talent were gathered together in the metropolis than it will ever be the fortune of that country to look upon again. Strange to say, this brilliant aggregate, we suppose by way of concentrating its spirit, fell into *conventual* shape; and thus was founded the order of the Monks of St Patrick, better known as the Monks of the Screw. It would be an idle task to enumerate here all that composed that choice company; it will be enough if we mention that in its ranks were to be found the honoured names of Grattan, Curran, Barry the painter, Hussey Burgh, Ponsonby, Corry, and Father O'Leary; of Lords Avonmore, Arran, Carhampton, Charlemont, Kingsborough, Mornington, Townshend, and Kilwarden. Nearly every one of its members attained to eminence in their respective professions, the brethren furnishing chief-justices, chancellors of the Exchequer, judges, and serjeants for many years to come. It will be seen, from the character of the members, that their meetings were of a very different description from the wild orgies of similar institutions on the other side of the water.

Every Saturday evening the community assembled in chapter in Lord Tracton's House, arrayed in the canonical costume of a black tabinet frock and cowl, with a cork-screw hanging from the waist by way of rosary. The chair was usually filled by the prior, the facetious Mr Curran, who in that capacity, as may be imagined, was all that could be wished; Judge Johnson did duty as sacristan; and Mr Doyle, a master in Chancery, officiated as abbot. Those chapter-nights were often looked back to in after-years with fond and vain regrets; and no wonder, for they were true feasts of reason, unalloyed with any feeling that might hereafter come back on them attended with shame or regret.

Such were these three notable societies, illustrating, we think, very curiously the strange chapter of human eccentricities.

A WORKING-MAN'S GROWL.

I MEANT to call this a grumble, but the dictionary says that grumble means to complain without a cause; and so, having plenty of cause for complaint, rather too much, I call it a growl. Those who read to the end, will find out whether it is properly titled or not.

I like fair play, I do; and I don't like being told there's fair play for everybody in this hard-worked old England of ours, when there isn't. If fighting against the longest odds is fair play—if being kept down is fair play—if 'dignity of labour' being made to look undignified, is fair play; then I give in at once, and acknowledge that I have been mistaken.

My growl doesn't mean biting: I don't blame anybody in particular; but somehow it seems as if it would ease my mind to speak out and say things that have lain heavy upon me for a good while. At times they bewilder me rather, especially when school-boy recollections of my old catechism put me on thinking I ought to be contented in my station of life. Who knows, if I say my say, perhaps some one who reads it may be able to give me a word of advice, or to tell me whether I *am* mistaken?

I'm a journeyman mechanic, always have been, and don't expect ever to be anything else, though I used to dream about it once. I can handle the plane and saw as well as anybody else, and can turn out a chest of drawers or a dining-table fit for any gentleman's house; ay, or the Queen's palace for the matter of that. I have worked for a good many masters in my time; if I hadn't, there wouldn't be anything for me to write about.

I shall never forget the master I was apprenticed to. All through the month I was on trial, I had my meals with him and his wife in the parlour; tea and toast for breakfast, and so forth. But the very next morning after my father came over to bind me, I was trundled into the kitchen, and a basin of slop, called broth, was put before me, and a few stale crusts. And this was a sample of my fare for three or four years: however, by hook or by crook, I managed to get enough; and that was something for a growing boy. I needn't say much about my master: two facts will paint his portrait. He kept me good part of my time splitting up tough, gnarly old roots of oak and elm for firewood, that being his way of teaching me to make chairs and tables; and at other times, when I was taking my turn in the workshop, he would come up and say to me and the other apprentices: 'Let's see which can look the silliest;' and then he would make a fool's countenance to the best of his ability, and the more we laughed, the better pleased he seemed to be. It was generally after dinner when he did this.

Nobody will be surprised that such a man became a bankrupt. He was just one of those—of whom there are too many now-a-days—not fit to be a master. My indenture was given up to me; and so, before half my time was up, I was free to go and work where I liked as a journeyman. I got taken on at another shop in the same town, and being kept steadily at the bench, I learned my trade, and managed to save something out of the trifle of wages that was paid me. After I had once got into the knack of it, the man who could work quicker, or shew better or sounder workmanship than I did, would have had to get up pretty early in the morning. 'Do your best, come what may,' was a saying of my good old mother's, and it stuck by me.

There was a Mechanics' Institute in the town; I joined it, and got well laughed at by my shopmates, who accused me of a wish to 'sneak in among the aristocracy.' I was always fond of reading, and never was fond of the public-house, and so there was always some sort of antagonism between me and the others. 'You ain't a-going to come your superiority over us,' they said, when I refused to go to the tippling-parlour at the Cross-Keys. I went twice, and that took away from me all desire ever to go again. To say nothing of sitting three or four hours in the midst of tobacco-smoke, the talk was of the stupidest and silliest kind—perfect bosh indeed, mingled at times with petty scandal. To sit and listen to that was more than I could bear, and I went over to the Mechanics' Institute, though it wasn't by any means what it ought to be. Since then, I have found out, by living in other places, that the managers of Mechanics' Institutes don't know how to make them useful or attractive in such a way as would catch working-men, that otherwise would be willing to join.

Now and then we had lectures, and I used to feel proud when the lecturer told us of the mighty achievements of labour and industry, and how that every working-man could get on if he only would. That was just what I wanted to do; but my shopmates wouldn't let me. Here was the beginning of my experience, that it isn't the classes above him—if there be any above him—that keep a working-man down, but his companions, those among whom he works and lives.

It isn't comfortable to be in the same workshop with men who think they have a right to annoy you in any way short of actual violence, and it isn't every one that's philosopher enough to bear daily taunts, sneers, and suspicions. Because their way of spending their overhours was not my way, they being seven or eight, and I only one, they chose to put me in the wrong, and act accordingly. However, I didn't quarrel with them, except when they played tricks with my work or hid my tools, and then I made a demonstration that insured me a week's quiet. A favourite notion with them was, that I was trying to curry favour with the master, and thereby get a run of the best work for myself; but this was a mistake. I never liked any of the masters I worked for, except one, well enough to make a friend of him, or ask favours; and as for the one then over me, he looked on his men as so many machines, out of which he had to make as much profit as possible; and he had, besides, a habit of putting off 'settling-day' as long as possible for himself, and longer than was convenient for me.

To a man whose wage is reckoned by shillings, any loss or stoppage, though small in itself, is felt at once, and seriously. He is saving for some special object—perhaps to buy a new coat or a watch—and notes already the time when the sparings of many weeks will enable him to effect his purpose. But he is exposed to see his expectations balked by the whims or greed of his master, or the caprices of a customer. One day, when I was at work on a chest of drawers, my master took it into his head that he would have the drawer bottoms tongued and grooved in the joints, contrary to all former practice. The 'stuff' was thin, and required delicate handling, and the joints took me half a day, instead of half an hour. What matters that, you will say, so long as 'twas paid for. That's just where it is; it wasn't paid for. The governor wouldn't give an extra half-penny for the making, and so I was half a day out of pocket.

There's no harm in my saying that I was quick at finding out new and readier ways of putting things together, so that I could finish in seven and a half or eight days a job that used to take me nine days. This did very well for a time or two; but by and by, when the master saw that I wanted a new job sooner than he had calculated, he wasn't long in finding out the reason why, nor in cutting down my wage. I remonstrated, but it was no use; he stuck hard and fast to this: 'If the job doesn't take you so long by a day, it isn't worth so much by a day.'

Nice encouragement this for a young fellow who worked hard, and tried to keep himself respectable; and when I thought of what the lecturers said at the Mechanics' Institute—that it depended only on the working-man himself whether he would get on or not, I made up my mind, feeling rather bitter at the same time, that they had never known what it was to work with none but working-men for companions, and for a master who considered nobody but himself.

Another trick the governor had that none of us liked—for we all had a taste of it—was to give us something—a chair, a wash-stand, or a few yards of carpet—to carry to a distant part of the town when we were going home for the evening. No matter how far it was, he would say: 'There, leave that as you go by. It isn't a yard out of your way,' when all the time the yard was a mile, very seldom less than half a mile. Not satisfied with the imposition, he took away whatever merit there was in our performance of it, and neutralised any satisfaction we might have felt in obliging him, by telling us the task wouldn't take us a yard out of our way. Why should a journeyman, whose spare hours are so few, be expected to give up a portion for a master who was so keen in cutting off the man's advantage in another way? My honest belief is, that nine out of ten masters ain't fit to be masters. Just think of having to go a mile out of your way on a cold or wet night, and missing the beginning of a lecture at the Mechanics' Institute!

Another thing: why should a man be made to lose so much time between job and job—and why should he have to wait so long for his money? Suppose you are at piece-work. Well, you get a pound or twenty-five shillings a week to keep you going, and the master makes up the difference—not at the end of the job, as he ought to, but when it pleases him, and that's generally about once a year. Is it fair the master should keep what belongs to the man? Why shouldn't the man have it, and put it in the savings-bank, and have whatever interest it brings? One day, when my governor owed me about L.10, I said to him very civilly that I should be glad if he would settle.

'What do you want with your money?' he asked snappishly.

'I want to put it in the savings-bank.'

'Oh, you are afraid of me, are you? Well, I'll settle with you.'

And so he did. He paid me the arrears, and gave me notice that when the job in hand should be finished, I might suit myself elsewhere.

I shifted my quarters to London, thinking there would be more independence for a journeyman in the great city than in a country town. I soon found work, in a shop not a great way from Tower Hill, kept by a man who supplied two first-rate houses with furniture. Of course he had his profit to make, and to do that he cut down prices to so low a figure, that unless you worked like a little steam-engine, there was no chance of making living wages. I got experience, it is true, and enlarged my knowledge of the trade; but in other respects, I had jumped from the frying-pan into the fire. My shopmates, about twenty in number, were a set of the greatest scamps I ever fell in with. Their talk was filthy and profane, and their habits to match. I wasn't squeamish, but the language I could not help hearing day after day made me feel degraded: my self-respect was wounded. And because I couldn't laugh at remarks that were thought to be witty, but were only foul and brutal, I was nicknamed the Methodist.

As for a sense of duty, I don't believe there was one of them knew what it meant. They would rob the governor, and cheat him in all possible ways. Their work was too often as bad as themselves, and the ingenuity they exercised to conceal its inferiority, would have more than sufficed to gain them first-rate wages by honest work in a first-rate shop. Stealing anything that was not likely to be missed for the moment was not stealing, only 'carrying it home.' And how they drank! Five pints of porter a day was the average; but two or three took their sixteen pints. And how perverse! Often when they knew a job was wanted in a hurry, they took all possible pains to delay it, and the governor would be driven crazy by their vexatious idleness. It was at times amusing to see what shifts he resorted to in order to get his precious crew to go ahead. Now and then he would make a pretence of stopping a man in the middle of a job to set him on another, whereupon there would be a terrible outcry: ''Tain't fair,' and 'Don't you stand it,' would be heard from all parts of the shop. The man himself would avow his determination not to stand it, and in proof thereof, work away at the job in hand, and finish it all the sooner. This was just what the master wanted; but what harassments he had to go through in dealing with such an unprincipled set. He had a good stroke of business, yet for all that I wouldn't have changed places with him for all he was worth.

I could fill whole pages with the sayings and doings of that workshop; but what would be the good? The manners, or rather want of manners that prevailed, shocked and amazed me; but I have since then fallen in with many—many more of the same stamp. Birds of a feather, it is said, flock together. How many do you suppose I have met with in my life like-minded with myself, decent fellows, whom I was glad to associate with? Guess! Only five; and one of them was a Frenchman.

Now, Mr Lecturer, are you quite sure it depends on the working-man himself whether he will get on in the world or not? It seems to me that his environment has something to do with the question; and when a man depends on his week's work for his week's means of existence, he can't always choose what his surrounding shall be. And for keeping you down, there is nothing like your workmates. Talk about being tyrannised over by the aristocracy—crushed with taxes—enslaved by monarchy, and what not; nothing stops the way so surely and fatally as the stupidity, to give it no worse name, of your fellows.

It seems to me, therefore, that whether the working-*man* shall get on or not, depends on working-*men*. Even as the proverb says: A man must ask his wife's leave to thrive.

I had heard of a large establishment at the west end, not ten miles from the marble arch, where hundreds of men were employed, and where a reading-room and all that sort of thing was fitted up on the premises for such as chose to make use of it. So I migrated from the east, and got work in what seemed such a promising place; not sorry to quit my ill-conditioned comrades.

By way of change, I took a turn at carpentry, which saved me from being shut up all the time in the workshop. I was employed a good while in some of those handsome rows of houses that link London to Kensington or Paddingtonia; and not a little pleased was I to find myself in a place where good workmanship was the rule. Every man was expected to do his best, and the foremen took care to see that the expectation wasn't balked. I didn't see any deliberate dishonesty while I was under this firm; but I did see a good many things that soon shewed my chance of getting on wasn't much, if any, better here than elsewhere.

I *work* when I am at work. One day I was hanging shutters in a new house. I took pains, and by the time the foreman came round in the afternoon, had got four pair hung. He approved the workmanship, but said: 'You are too quick for us: two pair a day is quite enough.'

I stared. It was nevertheless true. You were not to do as much as you could—only as much as by custom had come to be considered enough.

No getting on here, thought I, after this specimen of trade morality. The firm who consequently had to pay their hands for dawdling, and the customer or tenant whose pocket suffered in proportion, were not taken into consideration.

And I felt sure there would be no getting on when I saw how many toadies the foreman had, and how pleased he seemed to be with their subservience, and the use he made of it. Nothing like choosing one of yourselves, my mates, if you want to set up a chief who will make you feel what it is to be kept down. The foreman of the department I was in kept a public-house, and if he didn't see you pretty often in his tippling-parlour in the evenings, you had nothing to expect from him but disfavour. He had two or three grown-up daughters, whom he wished to marry off his hands, and lucky was the carpenter who paid his addresses to any one of them. Tiptop work and tiptop pay always fell to his share.

And then, notwithstanding the high character of the establishment, I found there was room for dishonesty. If a man was going out to lay down carpets, or put up curtains, and so forth, he went to the office for the necessary supply of tacks, nails, screws, &c. Not unfrequently he had twice as many as he wanted, and what he didn't use he kept.

I couldn't take any pains to conciliate the foreman, neither could I turn a penny by selling surplus tacks, &c., to the little ironmongers in the neighbourhood; and so, as I never had the luck to get tiptop wages, I left the model establishment at the end of a year.

Since then, I have been trying to get up a business on my own account. It is uphill work, and not very promising; but I am not obliged to toady anybody, or to associate with blackguardism or dishonesty. I am, in fact, my own journeyman.

I could not go quietly on, however, till I had puffed away the black thoughts that had been gathering upon my mind from the beginning. Now I have done it: I have had out my growl, and there's an end.

A RIDE IN THE FRENCH IMPERIAL MAIL-GIG.

Last summer there appeared in the *Journal* an entertaining account of a journey from Pumps to Springs by her Britannic Majesty's mail-gig, with the ups and downs, and the *dura mala* of the mail-road. Would your readers feel interested in an account of the style in which his Imperial Majesty Louis Napoleon conveys the letters of his loving subjects in this enlightened age?

It was my lot, some few weeks ago, to visit the *terra incognita*, or well-nigh such, once called Armorica, the cradle of our ancestors, now marked on the map of France as Finistère and the Côtes-du-Nord; and as my route lay beyond the line of service of the diligence, no other means of locomotion offered than to travel with the *courier* in the mail-cart.

I confess that the idea of a seven hours' ride by night was not inviting, especially as the distance was only thirty miles. But the saving of time and money being my object, I soon came to terms with the servant of the government; and at nine P.M. was ready in the yard of the Hôtel de France at Guingamp, awaiting the carriage that was to convey the imperial mail-bags to the Ultima Thule of Carhaix.

'Don't be afeard, sir,' was the salutation of a country woman, one Sally Heartel, who does for the English in that locality—'don't be afeard; the mare's only a little "fierce" or so!' This was not encouraging, but not likely to daunt one who had some experience of the Oxford screw.

'L'v'la le monsieur qui va voyager par le *casse-cou;*' said a *gamin* among the circle of idlers inseparable from a coach-yard all over the world. *Casse-cou*, that is breakneck in English; not a pleasant idea certainly. But there was not much time to deliberate: my bag and coat were whisked out of my hand, and deposited somewhere, and I was ordered to mount.

By the dim light of a stable lantern, I saw two wheels, and a confused jumble of leather, wood, and cords. The machine had no cushions, and but one spring, and every part had been patched and mended, till the original had almost disappeared. Indeed, the vehicle in any part of Europe would be a curious study for the antiquary: so shapeless and ancient, it appeared like a confused heap of wrecks, and waifs, and strays of the antediluvian world. The mare alluded to was an immense raw-boned cart-horse, with a hump like a camel, and so high, that the shafts were lifted up to an angle of 45 degrees to reach the tugs; and the cart hung back more fashionably than agreeably. But I had little time for further inspection; for the mail being deposited in the well, and a piece of broken board laid across for a seat, up we mounted—the jarvey on the near side, and myself on what should have been his seat in any other country. There is a police regulation in French towns, that after dusk every vehicle shall carry a lantern: accordingly, a lantern, or a substitute for it, with an inch of candle, was put into my hand; but as it had no handle, and only one glass unbroken, it required no slight skill to keep it alight, as the mare dashed off at once as soon as we mounted. With this feat of torch-bearing I was sufficiently occupied, till we got clear of the rattling stones and narrow lanes of Guingamp; but it was not long before the regulation inch of tallow burnt out; and the *octroi* being passed, we were left in outer darkness, and I was free to look after my own comfort.

The driver also seemed much at ease, for he dropped his reins, knotted his whip, and set himself to light his first pipe. I ventured to hint that the seat was rather hard, and likely to damage the nether man; but my friend only replied that it never did him any harm. So making the best of it with a great-coat, I settled down, and made no more remonstrance.

Jog, jog, on we laboured, to the music of the rattling ironwork and ungreased wheels, while the old machine lurched, and bumped, and lumbered along over the uneven road. But our worthy *conducteur* finished his pipe, and then composed himself to his first nap, and coolly laid his head on my shoulder to take it easy. This was rather too strong an invasion of rights; so, after shaking him off two or three times, I watched his coming, and as he lurched over to me, I leaned forward, and he pitched backwards with a momentum which nearly sent him over the back of the cart, and, as it was, deposited his *sombrero* in the road. This awoke him for a kilomètre or so; and being repeated as often as he tried to establish himself, proved an effectual means of keeping him awake. But he dropped his hat three times, and his whip twice, before we arrived at Callac. Meanwhile, the 'fierce' one had it all her own way, and trotted, walked, or galloped at her own sweet will, tacking up the hills, and artfully easing the weight in descending by grazing the wheel against the bank.

Two hours brought us to the first *posada*, where a branch of withered misletoe shewed that bad wine needed a bush; the horse stopped spontaneously, and the driver, being on friendly terms with the hostess, entered jauntily, and invited me to follow. The inmates were all in bed—indeed, no Breton peasant sits up beyond eight o'clock—but sundry night-capped heads peeped out of the little cupboards which serve for bedsteads in these parts, and a voice told us to help ourselves to cognac or cassis—the latter a tolerable liqueur, made from black currants. The driver said we must stop twenty minutes to *laisser souffler* the mare; so there was no help for it; but the place was insufferably close—how the natives can sleep in those closets, with only an inch or two of the sliding-door left open, is an impenetrable mystery—and I was glad to get out of the cabin, and exchange for the fresh air of heaven the reek of the tavern, and disappoint the fleas, which were beginning to smell the blood of an Englishman.

Having at length resumed our route, two hours more of up hill and down hill, of lurching and screaming of the rickety old vehicle, and smoking and snoring of the driver, brought us to the poverty-stricken village of Callac, where we were to change—I was going to say horses, but we rejoiced in only one; and this operation occupied another hour. The driver disappeared with the quadruped, and left me in the motionless, and now more tolerable vehicle, to study astronomy. I think he also improved the shining hour, as I judged from his increased incapacity, and an odour of garlic that floated around him when he returned. I may mention, for the benefit of my piscatorial brethren, that the river Hyères, which runs from Callac to Carhaix, is well stocked with trout, and would repay a visit to those who don't mind roughing it. The road, however, became worse after leaving Callac; and the animal that replaced the 'fierce' one being by no means high-mettled, our progress was slow, but not sure.

'Il n'est pas mauvais montant,' quoth the coachman; but 'descendant il ne vaut rien:' and so it proved. The road is all a series of hills; and when we had arrived at the summit of one, the descent was not so easy or pleasant as that is said to be which leads to Avernus. Bucephalus would insist upon subsiding on his hind-quarters, and sliding down two-thirds of the way; and then, aroused by a volley of whip-smacking and verbal insults, he would spring up, and dash down the remaining declivity like the possessed swine of holy writ. It was one of these *escapades* that brought our ride and our vehicle to an untimely end.

I was just thinking how beautifully the flush sunrise was gilding the hill-tops, and how fresh the morning air felt, making amends for the miseries of the journey, when we began to descend the worst hill we had yet encountered. We were at the highest point of the great range of the Menè, that runs through Brittany from east to west; and while the sun was lighting up the hill-tops, the valleys were enveloped in the mist-wreaths, with the tall poplars rising spectre-wise from the vapour; and the road seemed to plunge into a vast lake beneath us. It was too steep for our horse to slide down, and our driver urged him recklessly on. As we rushed down the steep and rotten road, I became aware of a sharp turn and a narrow bridge at the bottom, and got my legs loose for a jump. Just in time: for the off-wheel caught the edge of the parapet, and the horse went down with a terrible concussion; and a very complete upset was the consequence.

With a crashing and splintering up of the old car, I found myself flying through the air, and landed on the opposite bank, with his Imperial Majesty's mail-coachman underneath, and the body of the imperial mail-cart above me, some five yards from the rest of the apparatus. Shaking off the wreck, I emerged like a tortoise, and succeeded in kicking up the driver, who seemed desirous of lying where he was, and venting his remaining energy in heathenish or Breton execrations. We then proceeded to extricate the horse from the débris of the cart-harness in which he was struggling. The whole perch or body of the vehicle had dissolved partnership with the wheels; the imperial mail-bags, and my carpet-bag of ordinary life, were reposing side by side in the mud; and the whole affair, when set on its legs, seemed to have been transformed into a costermonger's cart. The next thing to be considered was how to perform the remainder of the journey. The driver was for riding into Carhaix, and sending back a conveyance for me; but this proposition was too indefinite to be entertained. The horse was a long-backed family quadruped, and could easily carry double; and as the cart was a total wreck, the best thing we could do was to take to the long-boat. So, disengaging the animal from the shafts, we disposed of the concern by pushing it out of the road; and then balancing the mail-bags on one side, and my *sac de nuit* on the other of the old horse, we climbed up, and rode the remaining league into Carhaix. I think our entry in this fashion created not a little sensation. It was only five A.M. when we arrived; but being market-day, there were plenty of natives with their horned charges to bid us welcome, and pass their jokes upon our appearance. I was only too thankful to have come off sound, wind and limb; but I suppose there was something mirth-provoking in the tall lean old chestnut ambling over the stones, with so singular, or rather plural, a burden. In front, Sancho Panza, with a huge sombrero and tight canvas pantaloons; and behind him, like Horace's black care, a tall gentleman in subfusk garments, and of sedate appearance, and the leathern bags hanging against the courser's sides—perhaps the natives may be excused for their jokes at our comical entry. But the driver, now metamorphosed into an outrider, brought his bags to the bureau in time; and made light of the breakdown, which one would think he had contrived for my special gratification, *pour amuser l'Anglais*. And the host at Guingamp, when I made my re-appearance at the table d'hôte, made a good story of the Englishman who travelled by the casse-cou, and inquired most kindly after the state of my dorsal and cervical vertebræ.

So there you have a true and particular account of the way the imperial post is *exploited*, as the French say in these parts. And if any of your readers pay this country a visit, they can doubtless be accommodated with a ride in a casse-cou; and I can only hope they will like it.

AN OLD MAN'S QUESTION.

STRANGE soul of mine, that rose, I know not whence,
Upon my sleeping life and mortal frame,
Like morn's sun o'er the mountains, all aflame,
And large through mists of childish innocence;
Which, year by year with me up-travelling thence
As hour by hour the day-star, madest aspire
My heart, thus interpenetrate with fire
It felt but knew not; spirit mixed with sense,
Wisdom with folly, genius with mere clay—
Soul, thou hast journeyed with me all this way,
Oft hidden, oft beclouded, oft arrayed
In scorching splendours which my earth-life burned,
Yet sunward up to thee my true life turned,
For, dark or clear, 'twas thou my daylight made.

Soul, set aloof in God's infinitude,
And sometimes seeming no more part of me—
This *me*, worms' heritage—than that sun I see
Is of the earth he has with warmth imbued,
Whence comest thou? whither goest thou?—I, subdued
With awe of my own being, sit me still
Dumb on the summit of this crownèd hill,
Whose dry November grasses, rain-bedewed,
Mirror a thousand suns—That sun which was
Light-bearer, passes: as thou soon must pass,
My soul! Art thou afraid? thou who hast trod
A path I know not, from a source to a bourne
Both which I know not—fear'st thou to return
Alone, even as thou camest—alone to God?

PROGRESS OF CALIFORNIA.

In riding through one of her large agricultural valleys, a few weeks since, where so late as 1852 there was scarcely a mile of fence to be seen from one end of it to the other, I saw now continuous grain-fields, of six or eight miles in length, with perhaps a dozen reapers, of the best patent, marching up and down, levelling the tall thick harvest. Comfortable, substantial farmhouses, or neat cottages, stand upon the sites of the little canvas shanties we used to see, and neat, often elegant vehicles, have taken the place of the clumsy coarse wagon of those times. You may travel in summer on all the main roads, from the north to the south, in the best Concord or Troy coaches, and be received, in the more considerable towns, at as good hotels as you will find at corresponding places anywhere in the Union. And even this great material progress is less expressive of the growth of the state than other signs at present visible in her condition.—*Farnham's California*.

ALCOHOL IN WINES.

The Customs Surveyor-generals have been busy collecting information to ascertain what quantity of proof-spirit per cent. is usually contained in port wine, and from an extensive range of trials, they have discovered the minimum to be 26 per cent. The majority of trials shewed from 30 to 36—some few parcels contained 40 per cent.—and (although the latter is bad enough in all conscience) in a few exceptional cases, as much as 55 per cent. has been detected. Those containing more than 33 per cent. are still held under stop, until the pleasure of the Lords of the Treasury can be ascertained. On the 28th of June 1853, a Treasury Minute was issued, under date 28th October 1853, prohibiting all alcoholic liquids from passing into consumption, as wine, which contained more than 33 per cent. of proof-spirit.—*Ridley & Co.'s Monthly Circular*.

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GENTEEL ECONOMY.

IT would be well for some of the more highly waged of our operative classes to know what is sometimes done, in the way of economical living, by persons whom they regard as their superiors. It often happens that a clergyman, a medical man, a teacher, or some other person of the so-called middle classes, has less income than an artisan. We lately heard of active ministers of the Established Church of England living on eighty pounds a year. We know that there are Episcopalian ministers in Scotland—officiating chiefly amongst the gentry—on similar stipends. Were there an advertisement for instances of surgeons and country schoolmasters not realising over a pound a week, we apprehend there would be an inpouring of answers like a spring-tide in the Severn or the Solway. Yet all of these people live with their families in a style notedly more elegant and sightly than do the generality of such of the working-people as enjoy equal or larger incomes. And not only this; but they often contrive to educate their children, and bring them forward in life, in a way never dreamt of by the most highly salaried operatives.

A remarkable instance of this has lately been revealed through a privately printed memoir of Mr Thomas Thomson, advocate—an eminent legal antiquary, and the man to whom the public has been indebted for the arrangement of the national records of Scotland. This gentleman, who was the intimate friend and associate of Jeffrey, Cockburn, and all that set, sprung from a manse in Ayrshire, where the family income was L.105 a year. The worthy clergyman not only gave his son Thomas the education required for the Bar, and the means of paying his fees on passing advocate, but reared another son to his own profession; besides whom there were other children to be provided for. How such feats were accomplished on so small means, while all the time the usual hospitalities of a rural parsonage were maintained, surpasses conception; yet we are assured they *were* performed, and the means were strictly no more than what is here stated; neither did the father of the family leave one shilling of debt.

It will be of no use to try to make out this as a peculiar and rare case, or as depending on conditions which only existed in a past age, for it is notorious that a very considerable proportion of the young men in both parts of the island, entering the legal profession, whether as barristers or solicitors, as well as those destined for the profession of the civil-engineer, and for service in India, are the children of clergymen possessed of incomes inferior to those enjoyed by many operatives. The present chief-justice of England is one of the sons of such a clergyman; and many others could be pointed to, now occupying distinguished situations in life. It is a marvel of no rare kind, to see an English clergyman sending his son, or sons, to Oxford, for an education, calling, while it lasts, for an outlay equal to the entire annual proceeds of the benefice. In these cases, of course, there must have been a saving during many years in order to meet the requirements of a few.

How is it that persons of small income in the middle classes make such good and laudable results out of their little means? There can rest no doubt that it is done only by great self-denial and frugality. The principle at work is that of Genteel Economy. There are elegant tastes calling for gratification; but they are quietly set aside. There is accomplishment that might adorn the saloons of the affluent; but it is calmly, though perhaps with a sigh, condemned to waste its sweetness on the desert air. Scenes of public gaiety are avoided, because they infer dresses that cannot be afforded. The friend is left uninvited, because the family *ménage* can scarcely shew before a stranger. What is called a very quiet life—that is, a life without the excitement from society which is one of its necessaries—is submitted to without a murmur, but not without suffering—sometimes not without positively hurtful consequences. The daily experiences of tradesmen and servants are often of a more enviable kind. Can anything be more affecting than a life in which so much that is needed, and that could be enjoyed, is dispensed with and postponed? We here see men and women to whom the future is more important than the present—to whom the intellectual is of more account than the material, the sentimental than the sensual—persons who, resigning themselves perhaps to a narrow and ungenerous lot, indulge the hope that their offspring will rise to something better, and for the realisation of that hope are willing and ready to make great sacrifices. If to make the future overrule the present, and to subordinate our own gratifications to those of some other person, is to advance in the scale of moral being, great praise is surely due to those who, from such motives, practise a genteel economy. Self-denial in such circumstances truly has in it that religious beauty which is only illusively associated with the self-denial of the ascetic.

Amongst the hand-workers, there is often equal or superior means, but much seldomer the disposition to fashion the ways of a household to the attainment of some postponed benefit. Nor is this wonderful, when we consider that the sense of such benefits is not so apt to be engendered in that class of minds. The intelligent member of the middle class *sees* what blessings attend refined life, when supported by sufficiency of means; he strains for those blessings, accordingly, for himself or his children. The artisan is shut out from contact with such things, and so far from hoping for, does not even think of them. Hence the so frequent and so sad spectacle of a *ménage* equally coarse and extravagant, luxury without comfort or refinement, and, what is more painful to look at, indulged in on the very brink of want and dependence. Till the sturdy operative shall be elevated by education and circumstances to higher ideas of what is really worth straining for in life, he will continue to fall far behind the genteel poor in these respects.

The Genteel Poor! name of pity and ridicule to many, a favourite theme of sarcasm among novelists and dramatists ever since modern fiction arose. And yet we do seriously believe that the genteel spirit is often not merely a softener of poverty, but a means of redemption from it. When the educated person of the middle classes is reduced to pennilessness, as often happens in this variable world, what is it that keeps him from sinking into and being lost in the obscure multitude but this spirit? what but this gives him the desire to struggle again up the slippery slope of fortune? A gentleman now in a very distinguished situation in life has assured us, that when he found himself in his youth brought by the misfortunes of his family into association with the humbler class of people, it was alone *the sense of the better sphere of life he had been in* which inspired him with the industry and self-denial by which he has worked his way so far upward. And we can well believe it. It may be called by such names as pride and vanity; but if these names be rightly applied, then we would assume and defend the position, that pride and vanity are things not without their use in our moral economy.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

FLORIDA—TEXAS—FUGITIVE SLAVE-BILL.

Sympathising with the Americans in their unfortunate inheritance of slavery, and making every allowance for the constitutional difficulties which are presumed to surround any plan for its eradication, we must regret the manner in which this portentous evil has not only been suffered but actually stimulated to grow in dimensions. At no period since the foundation of the Union, has the number of slaves diminished; on the contrary, it has regularly increased; and at the period at which our narrative has arrived, 1820, it amounted to 1,538,064.

From the time the Missouri Compromise came under agitation, there was a succession of measures, all tending to extend the sphere of compulsory servitude. The first of these was the annexation of Florida, which did not excite any particular hostility. The peninsula of Florida—swampy, rich in alluvial marshes and savannahs, and eminently suitable for the production of rice and the sugar-cane—possesses a history abounding in picturesque incident. Discovered and settled by the Spaniards; captured by the English; then rendered back to the Spaniards; it ultimately, during the early years of the present century, became an object of desire to the United States—to which, by contiguity, it formed so convenient an appendage, that its fate from the outset could easily have been foretold.

The Americans, as their best friends allow, have never, on suitable occasions, been at a loss to make out a good case of injury, requiring smart reparation. The Floridans were a bad set. They had preyed like freebooters on American commerce, and the sufferers were denied all redress from Spain; they had excited the Indians to molest the frontiers of the states; and, worst of all, they had given refuge to runaway slaves from Georgia and Louisiana. Such proceedings were intolerable. Pacific overtures having failed, the United States government despatched a military force to overrun Florida. Negotiations followed, in which the Americans advanced a claim to Texas, as having been a portion of the old French province of Louisiana, which the Spaniards ought long since to have relinquished. Spain was thankful to buy off this strange demand, and otherwise adjust the claims against it, by ceding Florida; the United States at the same time undertaking to indemnify citizens for their losses. In virtue of a treaty to this effect, Florida was taken possession of by General Jackson in the summer of 1821. As a territory of the Union, this hapless peninsula endured for some time the horrors of a war levied against the Seminole Indians, with a view to recover fugitive slaves and their descendants. The narrative of this ruthless war of races, aggravated by the use of bloodhounds to trace the Indians and negroes through the brakes and swamps, involves instances of more fearful suffering and daring heroism than perhaps any history of modern times. Finally, the Indians being subdued and removed in a body, and the real or alleged fugitives secured, Florida settled down into the ordinary condition of a state, with slavery as a legalised institution.

The claim on Texas on the above occasion, shewed pretty conclusively that there were parties in the United States who cast a longing eye in that direction. The practice of acquiring new countries and adding them to the Union, began with Louisiana and Florida, and with these precedents, might be carried to any extent. The desire for these territorial acquisitions, though partly owing to the restless character of the Americans, as well as to certain necessities in their position, arose in no small degree from causes connected with slavery. Not to speak of the exhaustion of lands by slave-labour, and the corresponding obligation to seek for fresh scenes of operation, there is an incessant natural increase in the slave population, which leaves to planters no choice between being eaten up by servants and sending them adrift through the agency of the slave-trader. On this account alone, there is positively no limit to the extension of slavery. Unless the surplus be carried off by emancipation—and to that the law in several states presents serious obstacles—there is no restricting it in amount or keeping it within a definite locality. Then, we have the commercial principle giving active impulse to the institution. Slave-breeders and traders rejoice in the prospect of new settlements and new purchasers; and if the matter rested with them, they would be glad to see the Union ingulf country after country, till at length there was nothing more to incorporate. To this wild demand for territorial enlargement, the central government, for obvious reasons, can give no external concurrence in the first instance; but that is of little consequence. The condition of affairs in America is at all times favourable to the commission of daring exploits by private adventurers, whose acts can be repudiated or sanctioned as circumstances shall determine. In no country in Europe could be found groups of individuals at all to compare with these adventurers, of the true filibuster type. They are the refuse of the world—penniless, reckless, confident, and unscrupulous. Refugee Poles, Italians, and Frenchmen; exiles from the British Islands, bankrupt in character and fortune; Portuguese and Spaniards, with predatory habits acquired in the slave-trade or in freebooting; immigrant Germans, who, instead of pushing off to inland rural settlements, as is usual with their countrymen, have become frequenters of taverns, and copiously indulge in 'lager beer;' sons of American gentlemen, who, brought up without restraint, and having gone through their fortune, loiter about bar-rooms and gaming-houses, get up dog and cock fighting matches, and at night tormenting the streets as rowdies—all are ready for any sort of mischief. Such are some of the elements of a filibustering expedition, of which, however, the 'white trash' of the south, by whom honest labour is deemed a disgrace, usually form the staple material. Equip, arm, and ship off company after company of this heterogeneous mass—see them land in grotesque costume, their trousers stuffed into dirty boots, their striped or red woollen shirts, their rusty beards, hats of every imaginable shape, belts stuck with bowie-knives and revolvers, and rifles slung over their shoulders—chewing, spitting, swearing—and you have an army of marauders such as, we venture to say, could be nowhere else produced on the face of the earth.

Nature accomplishes great designs by rough agencies. The Old World was not peopled and settled as we now see it, without going through centuries of violence and bloodshed. Greeks, Persians, Romans, Goths, Saxons, Normans, and Sea-kings, all in their turn conquered without justice or mercy. But that was long ago, and one imagines that, under the lights of Christianity and modern civilisation, things should be managed differently. True in one respect, but not in another. Much of the American continent is now going through its ancient and middle ages. Filibusters are the Sea-kings of the nineteenth century. Who is to restrain them, so long as they confine their stealthy attacks to regions under a weak rule, adjoining the southern states, and the annexation of which to the Union flatters the desire for national aggrandisement? If to this we add the ardent demand for new territories over which to disseminate slave-labour, the impulse for acquisition not only becomes irresistible, but, to judge from past events, is almost certain to receive the countenance of the highest federal authorities.

Looking about for means of advancing their interests, slaveholders and slave-traders saw no outlet so available as that westwards along the Gulf of Mexico into Texas. This province, of almost matchless fertility, producing cotton equal to the finest in the United States, extended over twelve degrees of latitude, with an area large enough to form eight or nine ordinary sized states; and it was calculated that, if freely opened to planters and their servants, the value of human stock would probably rise fifty per cent. Ever seeking new spots for settlement, parties of emigrants had begun to find homes in Texas as early as 1819. They were chiefly from the north, and, for the sake of material interests, were fain to submit to the petty tyranny which usually accompanies the Spanish rule. Some years elapsed before there appeared any chance of success for a filibustering expedition. As soon, however, as Mexico had shaken off Spain, and declared itself a republic, things seemed ripe for striking a blow. From this time, 1834–5, we hear of migration into Texas on a formidable scale. It is no longer parties of industrious yeomen who come across the frontier, but companies of armed men, under southern leaders of military reputation. Claiming to have territorial rights under grants from Mexican authorities, there arrive in their train, flocks of greedy speculators and jobbers, holders of scrip in real or pretended joint-stock land companies, besides a floating mass of adventurers anxious to secure whatever good might fall in their way—and when we recollect that there was a country as large as France to be won by dint of a little impudence and fighting, and that the first-comers had the best chance, the rush to Texas is no great matter for surprise. The method of appropriation, however, is curious. It resembles nothing so much as that of a lodger who, taking a fancy to his quarters, begins by finding fault with his landlord, and ends with turning him out of doors. Clearly, the Americans had no business in Texas—not any more than the English had in India—and if they went thither, it was their duty as foreigners to remain quiet. But good order and respect for rights are, in such cases, against all rule. How the Texan settlers and their allies picked endless quarrels with the wretched government to which the province nominally belonged—how, under General Sam. Houston, the invading host unfurled the standard of rebellion—the significant lone-star—which like a meteor they carried through the country, as far as the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte—how they overpowered the Mexicans, and in one of their battles captured Santa Anna, whom they set at liberty only on having conceded to them the independence of Texas—are all circumstances well known. In short, in the space of two years, by the desultory movements of a body of unauthorised adventurers, an extensive and valuable province was wrested from Mexico. The brilliance of this exploit is somewhat lessened by the fact, that a large army entered Texas, by order of the United States government, professedly to allay Indian disturbances, but really to hang about as a reserve, to countenance, and, if need be, to support, the filibusters. The object of the invasion was never a matter of doubt. It was to secure independence, and then to seek annexation, with a view to strengthening southern interests, by adding several new slaveholding states to the Union. On the character of this splendid manœuvre, we should prefer allowing an American writer to speak. 'Some crimes by their magnitude,' says Channing, 'have a touch of the sublime; and to this dignity the seizure of Texas by our citizens is entitled. Modern times furnish no example of individual rapine on so grand a scale. It is nothing less than the robbery of a realm. The pirates seize a ship. The colonists and their coadjutors satisfy themselves with nothing short of an empire.' Shrinking from annexation, he adds that this act will be accomplished only at the 'imminent peril' of American 'institutions, union, prosperity, virtue, and peace.'*

In the wilful perpetuation and extension of slavery—its infliction on a country from which it was expelled—lies, perhaps, the chief odium of this great deed of spoliation. Although accustomed to look with contempt on Spain and the transatlantic nations which she has planted, we are obliged in the present instance, as an act of simple justice, to state, that when the Mexicans attained to independence, they at the same time loosened the bonds of the slave—decreeing, 'that no person thereafter should be born a slave, or introduced as such into the Mexican states; that slaves then held should receive stipulated wages, and be subject to no punishment but on trial and judgment of the magistrate.' Doubtless, these humane provisions were partly a consequence of the large infusion of mixed breeds and persons of colour in all ranks of Mexican society; but be this as it may, slavery had been abolished in Texas when it fell into the hands of the Americans. After this occurrence, however, slaves were rapidly introduced, and with avowed slavery institutions, the republic claimed to be admitted into the Union. When annexation was formally proposed, there was a considerable division of opinion as to its expediency. Petitions were presented to congress, and Daniel Webster, among other men of note, offered some wholesome oratorical opposition to the measure, on the ground that the admission of so large a region as Texas would give a most undue preponderance to the South. In one of his speeches, he says: 'I frankly avow my entire unwillingness to do anything which shall extend the slavery of the African race on this continent, or add other slaveholding states to the Union. When I say that I regard slavery in itself a great moral, social, and political evil, I only use language which has been adopted by distinguished men, themselves citizens of slaveholding states. I shall do nothing, therefore, to favour or encourage its further extension. In my opinion, the people of the United States will not consent to bring a new, vastly extensive, and slaveholding country, large enough for half-a-dozen or a dozen states, into the Union. IN MY OPINION, THEY OUGHT NOT TO CONSENT TO IT. Indeed, I am altogether at a loss to conceive what possible benefit any part of this country can expect to derive from such annexation. All benefit to any part is at least doubtful and uncertain—the objections obvious, plain, and strong. On the general question of slavery, a great portion of the community is already strongly excited. The subject has not only attracted attention as a question of politics, but it has struck a far deeper-toned chord—it has arrested the religious feeling of the country; it has taken a strong hold on the consciences of men. He is a rash man, indeed, and little conversant with human nature, and especially has he a very erroneous estimate of the character of the people of this country, who supposes that a feeling of this kind is to be trifled with or despised. It will assuredly cause itself to be respected.' In conclusion, he said: 'I see, therefore, no political necessity for the annexation of Texas to the Union—no advantages to be derived from it, and objections to it of a strong, and, in my judgment, decisive character. I believe it to be for the interest and happiness of the whole Union to remain as it is, without diminution and without addition.'

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* *Channing's Letter to the Hon. Henry Clay, on the Annexation of Texas.* 1837.

Expostulation was useless. By the election of Mr Polk as president, November 1844, the people shewed their desire for annexation. When the subject was debated in congress, a resolution to annex was carried, and Texas was accordingly incorporated as a state in 1845, without any restriction as to slavery. It was provided that four new states of convenient size might afterwards be formed out of it; and further, that slavery, at the discretion of the inhabitants, might exist in all the new states, south of 36° 30′ north latitude, commonly known as the Missouri Compromise line.

Out of the annexation of Texas sprung a war, which in its turn produced still greater extensions of the Union. According to Mexican topography, the boundary of Texas on the west was the river Nueces. The Texans, however, insisted that the proper limit was the Rio Grande del Norte; and in 1846, an army of occupation under General Taylor was marched into the disputed region. On this and some other grounds of dispute, a collision with the Mexicans ensued; and for two years subsequently, there raged a war by sea and land with the United States. The result, as might have been expected, was disastrous to the Mexicans, who were no match for the Americans. Under General Scott, the war was prosecuted with consummate skill, and nothing could have been more easy than the conquest of the whole of Mexico, had it been expedient to carry matters that length. By the final terms of adjustment, the United States government paid large sums to Mexico for extensive tracts of country which might have been retained or taken by force. The possessions acquired on this occasion included California, and certain regions in the interior, now composing the territories of New Mexico and Utah—in fact, by these annexations, in conjunction with rights founded on pre-occupation, the dominion of the United States engrossed the entire continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the British possessions on the north to the shrunken republic of Mexico on the south; and it seemingly became only a question of expediency as to the time when all that remained of Mexico should swell the gigantic proportions of the Union.

To procure a command of money for the purchases from Mexico, a bill of appropriation was laid before congress. Now ensued a long and entangled contest between parties respecting the restriction or non-restriction of slavery in the lands about to be acquired from Mexico; it was, in fact, a resumption of the old dispute, whether congress had the power to determine the institutions of the territories. The debate in the first instance turned on the motion of Mr David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, usually called the Wilmot proviso, which was to the effect of passing the bill, 'provided neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of the territory to be acquired from Mexico.' This and similar restrictive clauses were lost. In the succeeding congress, 1847, a bill was carried to organise the territory of Oregon, according to the provisions in the ordinance of 1787. This latter point, which insured freedom to the territory, was carried with some difficulty. It may here be added, that the territory of Minnesota was organised, 1849, and that of Washington, 1853, both with free institutions. The northern situation of these territories, we presume, rendered them not very available for slavery.

During the passage of the Oregon bill, an attempt was made by the slaveholding interest to extend the line 36° 30′ to the Pacific; but it was defeated. The object of the movement was, in effect, to make a distinct division of the United States into North and South, each with its peculiar institutions. Such a division was felt to be essential to the permanence of slavery; for if, at any subsequent period, free states should be organised on the borders of Texas, they would be a ready refuge for the whole slave population. The defeat of the proposed division, which was a kind of northern triumph, did no more, however, than postpone for a short time the tug of war. Hitherto, while there were plenty of new lands north and south to annex, free and slave states had been added in so equal a proportion, that the numerical balance was kept tolerably even. Now, the unoccupied lands in the north were becoming scarce; many new free states in that direction were hopeless; and if the balance was to be maintained, the North would require to seek for an equipoise south of the line of the Missouri Compromise. The game of pitching new states into the Union was getting serious—the result critical.

Nations, like individuals, usually add more to their cares than their comforts by their acquisitions of property. The United States had from small beginnings become a mighty empire; but while prosperous in its material interests, it was torn with intestine commotions. It had acquired enormously large possessions in the south; but what was to be done with them? Eager discussions respecting these acquisitions occurred in the congress 1849-50. Zachary Taylor, the new president, having recommended the organisation of California as a state, and New Mexico and Utah as territories, of the Union, there arose a contest on that everlasting subject—the imposition of restrictions as to slavery. Once more, Henry Clay interposes to allay the storm with an ingeniously complicated and specious compromise. To understand the purport of this beautiful piece of legislation, it is necessary to have some notion of the state of affairs since 1834. The invasion of Texas, and its probable results in extending slavery, greatly stimulated the party of Abolitionists, who about this time began to agitate with uncommon zeal—perhaps more zeal than discretion—through the agency of speeches, pamphlets, and petitions. One of the things they especially demanded was the expulsion of slavery from the District of Columbia, where it was a scandal to the official capital of the States. So numerous were the petitions presented to congress on this and analogous subjects, that at length the extraordinary resolution to receive no more was adopted, and for several years the very right of petition was so far suspended. It was during this turbulent decade (1830–40), that a bill was brought in to extend the slave state of Missouri. The prescribed boundaries of this state on the west having excluded a triangular district, which remained free soil in virtue of the ordinance of 1787, the incorporation of it was anxiously desired by the Missourians, for it was exceedingly fertile, and lay on the route to the rich and still unappropriated lands of Kansas. Strange to say, the bill to incorporate this region—legally insured to freedom—was passed in 1836 without any perceptible opposition. The tract so annexed composes six counties, and has become one of the most populous and wealthy sections of the state, devoted to the growing of hemp, tobacco, and other articles, and cultivated by slaves. This, we are told, 'is the most pro-slavery section of the state, in which was originated, and has been principally sustained, that series of inroads into Kansas, corruptions of her ballot-boxes, and outrages on her people, which have earned for their authors the appellation of *border ruffians*.' *

Not discouraged, the ultra anti-slavery party kept up a constant war of argument and remonstrance through the press. The Texan invasion and its consequences imparted fresh energy to the remonstrants. Petitions for a dissolution of the Union, for amendments in the constitution, for a reform of the representation, were poured into congress, and when discussions arose respecting the admission of California, the contest overshadowed all other questions. Clay, as has been said, now comes on the scene, with his plan of conciliation, which, being embodied in several bills, was cleverly carried through congress in August 1850. This famous 'omnibus' measure, as it was called, was worthy of Clay's genius. The South had complaints against the North, on account of the difficulties thrown in the way of recovering fugitive slaves. The North complained that slavery continued to exist in the District of Columbia. Clay projected some mutual concession on these points; and as the South was the more intractable, adjusted its demands by conceding that the inhabitants of the new southern acquisitions should exercise the right of introducing or excluding slavery; further, the original compact with Texas was confirmed, and its western boundary fixed at the Rio Grande del Norte. California was admitted as a state, and New Mexico and Utah as territories, on the basis of 'squatter sovereignty'—a circumstance of no moment, as it proved, to California, which, though already intruded on by some planters and their slaves, made choice of freedom. Slavery was not abolished in Columbia, but the slave-trade and open sales of slaves were prohibited under heavy penalties in the District. Lastly, the Fugitive Slave Bill strengthened those provisions in the federal constitution for recovering runaways, which in many parts of the country had become practically inoperative. These united measures did not become law without incurring opposition on both sides; but we are concerned to observe, that in all the divisions in the legislature, members from free states voted with the South—the only rational explanation of this being, that the principle of freedom *versus* slavery had not attained force sufficiently distinct to overcome party connection or individually selfish considerations. Among the eminent men who on this occasion voted in violation of formerly professed principles, was Daniel Webster—a circumstance of which he was so painfully reminded by his rejection at a convention for proposing candidates for the presidentship, that he languished and died 'a damaged man,' October 1852. Clay, a short time before, made an equally abrupt and unlamented exit.

It is now, we believe, generally admitted by its partisans, that Clay's Fugitive Slave Bill was a grave political blunder; for, besides failing in its professed object, it exasperated the North in no ordinary degree, and, more than anything else, has there promoted an unconquerable hatred of slavery and all engaged in its support. Of the working of this most odious measure, we may afterwards have occasion to speak. Meanwhile, it is enough to say, that it is already as much a dead-letter in several northern states as were the original obligations on which it was founded. So much for Clay's omnibus measure, which was to insure universal harmony! So much for what a committee of congress in 1854, sagaciously proclaimed as having been 'a final settlement of the controversy, and an end of the agitation.' Well may one say, with how little wisdom is the world governed!

With the incentives to increase, to which we have drawn attention, it will not be thought remarkable that in 1850, the number of slaves in the United States had risen to 3,204,313. W. C.

THE SHOE-BLACK BRIGADE.

Somewhere about a year ago, a friend pressed upon my attention what he termed the Shoe-black Brigade of London, and expatiated so long and freely upon the excellency of the institution, upon the good it had effected and was effecting, and the support it deserved from the public, that the desire to inquire further about, nay, rather to look into its operations and to examine its merits, became irresistible. The facts which have come to my knowledge, in the course of this investigation, are of so interesting a nature, that I make bold to lay them before the general reader, feeling assured he will derive the same pleasure from the perusal of the following details that I experienced in collecting them.

The institution is unique in its way: in no part of the world can its like be found. Shoe-brushing establishments, it is true, exist elsewhere: in most French towns of any importance, shops, or rather saloons, are elegantly fitted up with broad easy divans, covered with rich crimson-velvet, running round them, and invariably recognisable by the inscription, printed in large letters over the entrance, *Ici on cire les bottes.* At the corner of every street you may also meet with a *commissionaire*, dressed in a bottle-blue suit of corduroy, with a large tin badge upon his left arm, sitting on or leaning over a box, the inside of which contains his brushes and his *verni;* and, for a couple of sous, you may have your trousers cleansed and an exquisite polish given to your upper leather.

Still, nowhere will you find a company, a guild of shoe-blacks, organised in the same manner, with such high aims, with such generous and philanthropic objects in view. In the one case, the hard necessity of getting a livelihood is the object, and men, not boys, are the operators; in the other, the desire of finding employment for the poor and neglected children of the streets and alleys of our overgrown metropolis, originated the system, and it has subsequently proved a valuable stepping-stone to something better—to something higher. The purpose of the institution is not reformatory; the object of its promoters is rather to keep those under their charge from falling into vicious courses of life, which would certainly lead them to the reformatories, or, if not thither, to the prisons or the galleys. Their motto might well be, 'Prevention is better than cure.'

It appears, that about five or six years ago, a number of gentlemen, principally members of the Temple or Lincoln's Inn, taking a lively interest in the future of the children of those marvellous academies for the hungry and naked, those Samaritan universities for the hitherto poor and neglected—the Ragged Schools—formed themselves into a committee for the purpose of finding out and organising remunerative occupation for the scholars who conducted themselves well, and were desirous of rendering themselves useful. With this view, a company of shoe-blacks, broomers, and messengers was set on foot. The idea of public shoe-blacks was a revived rather than an original one, since, years ago, our forefathers used to enjoy the luxury at the corners of the streets. The opening of the Great Exhibition, however, and the expected influx of visitors from all parts of the world, favoured, if it did not suggest the idea in the present instance, as it seemed to afford a splendid opportunity for employing the children of the Ragged Schools largely to their own profit.

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* *History of the Struggle for Slavery Extension or Restriction.* By Horace Greeley. Dix & Edwards, New York, 1856.

Accordingly, on Monday the 31st of March 1851, five boys were selected, and sent out for the first time to work in the streets. A few weeks sufficed to determine the success of the enterprise. By the end of July, thirty names were enrolled on the books of the committee.

One of the great difficulties, however, the promoters of the scheme had to contend with, was the selection of proper stations for the boys, since the commissioners of police regarded with rather a reluctant eye this innovation, being apprehensive of having their highways and by-ways obstructed by a corps of disorderly shoe-blacks; though it did probably occur to them that this corps would be far less troublesome when earning thus a decent livelihood, than afterwards, if allowed to run adrift upon society. The orderly conduct of the boys themselves, however, overcame the scruples of the civic functionaries; special posts were established, and divisions formed, not only with the sanction, but under the protection of the superintendent. The receipts of the first six months, it was found, were larger than they have been since within the same period. This is to be attributed to the great influx of foreigners and country-people flocking to London during these months. But the occasion gave a fair start to the enterprise; and it went on extending its ramifications, until it was found necessary to break up the original society into three distinct bodies, for the better working of the system.

The three societies are—the Original Shoe-black Society, head-quarters Maiden Lane, Covent Garden; the East London Society, head-quarters High Street, Whitechapel; and the South London Society, head-quarters High Street, Borough.

No boy can be admitted into any of these societies except on the recommendation of the superintendent of a Ragged School in connection with the Ragged School Union. The *postulant*, or candidate for employment, must also bring a printed form, properly filled up and signed, stating his name and age; the length of time he has attended school; whether he has at any time been employed in service; whether he has been in prison; whether his parents are living, &c. It should be observed, too, that the committee prefer boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen, since experience has shewn that the disposition is then more tractable, the character more quickly formed, and the boys more willing to undergo the training necessary to fit them for their duties. It is then they begin to understand the utility of the discipline they are subjected to, and can best appreciate the motives which influence their teachers and directors.

When a youth enters, he is first initiated into the mystery of handling the brushes. To give perfection in this branch, only a few days' practice are deemed requisite, and he is then sent forth upon trial, not as one of the elect, but simply as a novice. The term of probation lasts a month, during which time the boy is expected to continue his connection with the school from which he came, and to attend it Sundays as well as week-day evenings as often as he can. To insure regularity in his attendance, he receives a card, on which the superintendent marks the number of times he is present. This card is given up on Monday mornings, and the times of attendance noted down. If the boy, on probation, proves steady, industrious, and skilful in his new occupation, he is regularly admitted, and dons the uniform of the society of which he is made a member, and is provided with the necessary implements out of the general fund.

The uniform not only enables the superintendent to recognise his protégés, but the public also; so that by thus making the youths conspicuous in the street, it serves as a check upon any irregularity on their part. Much the same sort of plea retains the odd, quaint dress of the times of Edward VI. in Christ's Hospital. The boys of the Original Society are distinguished by a *red jersey* and cap with a *red* band; the East London Brigade by a blue uniform; whilst the boys of the South London Society wear a yellow or canary-coloured jersey, with a cap with a yellow band. Badges, again, are required to indicate each individual of these several corps; consequently, either on their breast or right arm, or sometimes on both, a piece of cloth is sewn, bearing a particular letter or letters, worked in white beads by the children of the Lisson Street Refuge. This institution, whose services are thus made available, was founded in 1850 by a few charitable ladies, who interested themselves greatly in the female branch of the Ragged Schools. Perceiving that, unless the poor girls taught in these establishments were separated from the kind of life they had led and were leading, the good achieved by the schools would be neutralised as they grew older, these kind ladies hired a few rooms, which were fitted up for the boarding and lodging of seven. Since then, however, 150 have been received into this asylum, of whom sixty-six have been provided for, and the rest returned home to their friends. Whilst in the Refuge, they are trained to become useful servants, and taught reading, writing, ciphering, &c., as well as needle-work and straw-bonnet making. There is also another establishment which we must notice *en passant*, in reference to the Ragged Schools' Shoe-black Society. We allude to the Grotto Passage Ragged and Industrial Schools. Here tailoring, shoemaking, mat and rug weaving, box-making, hair-picking, and wood-chopping, are the principal occupations pursued. And it is here that the boxes containing the blacking and the brushes for the shoe-blacks, and the mats on which they kneel, are fabricated, so that one institution aids the other in becoming self-supporting.

It may here be observed, that the boxes and uniforms are regularly deposited at the offices of the different societies, as soon as the day's work is over; and if the lads return home, they return home in the plain suits in which they came, or others left at the offices by charitable persons, for the use of the most ill-clad. After their first equipment, too, the boys have to purchase both their uniforms and implements, but these they obtain at half-price. The object is to relieve the society as far as possible of unnecessary burden, and to render the boys careful in the use of what they have received gratis.

At seven o'clock in the morning, the boys assemble at head-quarters. Prayers and passages from the Scriptures are then read, either by one of the committee or the superintendent. Before the Blue and Yellow Societies had established more central points for assembling, some of the boys came in from great distances—from Maida Hill, Whitechapel, and even from Narrow Street, Ratcliffe—to the offices then in York Place, Strand. One boy, for nearly two years, came every morning from the east end of London, and returned at night; thus walking more than eight miles, besides the distances between the office and his station, which sometimes exceeded two miles. It was with the object of reducing the distances the poor boys had to travel to their head-quarters, that the society was broken up into three divisions. When prayers are concluded, the boys disperse to their different stations, where they remain till the evening. The hour of return, however, varies according to the time of the year—being four o'clock in winter, and half-past six in summer. During the day, the lads are frequently visited at their posts by the superintendent or his assistant, who observes their conduct, and supplies them with blacking should they want it.

The sum of one penny only is allowed to be asked for brushing the trousers and cleaning the boots; but sometimes more is given—a practice which the committee discountenance, as it is apt to make the lads dissatisfied with their legitimate remuneration. A daily account is kept with each boy, who surrenders into the hands of the superintendent his daily gains, which are thus disposed of: Sixpence is returned as a regular allowance; the remainder is divided into three equal parts, one of which is given to the boy in addition to the sixpence, one retained by the society towards defraying the working-expenses and making the institution self-supporting, and one is deposited in a fund reserved as a bank for the future benefit of the boy. By this regulation, three shillings a week at least is guaranteed to each boy; and should his earnings fall below sixpence a day, the difference is charged to his bank. This, however, rarely happens; for it has been ascertained that, by industry and proper attention, a shoe-black can make on an average two shillings a day; and if his earnings habitually fall below that amount, he is deemed unfit for the employment, and discharged from it. It has also been ascertained that different stations have different values, and further, as a general rule, what the value is. Accordingly, to equalise as much as possible the earnings of the boys, they were not allowed to remain more than three days at the same post. Originally, all the stations were occupied by the lads in succession; but for some time past the stations have been divided into three classes. This arrangement was made with a view of enforcing a better discipline, by introducing the system of promotion. Twelve of the best boys were placed in the first class; fourteen in the second; and the remainder in the third—the third being the lowest class, into which all new-comers entered. In the early part of 1855, however, an important change was effected at the suggestion of the chief-commissioner of the city police. The boys employed within the walls were classed separately, and now work only at stations within the city boundaries. Since then, four classes of stations have been established—the first and second, city; and the first and second, town.

Every week, a list of each boy's earnings is made out and suspended in the office of the society to which he belongs. This list is anxiously scanned by each member, as thereby he knows the state of his revenue. As soon as a boy's capital amounts to ten shillings, he is allowed to draw it out to provide himself with good working-clothes, or other things necessary for his comfort; and should he desire afterwards to draw further sums, he can do so, but only with the consent of the committee. The weather and the seasons make considerable difference in the profits of the day. Warm sunny weather, with a few showers, is the most auspicious; a heavy wet day is the least favourable; but a public holiday is the best of all. On the 2d of May 1854, two boys, stationed at the Wellington statue, Royal Exchange, made between them L.1, 1s. 8d., or 10s. 10d. each, the largest sum earned by any boy in one day. The economical principle upon which the banks are conducted enables the more steady boys to realise considerable amounts. According to a report printed two years ago, one lad had the sum of L.7, 18s. 4d. to his credit; whilst another had accumulated no less a sum than L.23, 11s. The latter youth was promoted for his good conduct to the rank of assistant, or, as it is more commonly called, inspector. He has since emigrated to Australia, and in that favoured land realised, doubtless by habits acquired under the care of the society, a large sum of money. When a lad leaves the service, or rather the protection of the society, the balance in his favour in the bank is paid to the superintendent, to be laid out for his benefit. Many have by this means been apprenticed; some have obtained outfits for emigrating; and some good clothes to enter respectable situations.

The average number of boys employed by the Red Society rose from twenty-four in 1852 to forty-eight in 1856; and their earnings in the last-mentioned year amounted to L.1432, 8s. 7d. The Yellow Society, the youngest branch, has been established only two years; average number of boys, twenty-eight and thirty-two; and aggregate earnings for the two years, L.894, 17s. 4½d. But the Blue Society (East London) possesses a feature in its administration peculiar to itself. 'It goes'—to use the words of a zealous promoter of this branch—'still lower in the scale than the other two; for while they employ only those boys who have homes, we—the Blue—take the houseless and most destitute, cleanse them from their filth and vermin, and so completely change their outward appearance, that their former acquaintance scarcely know them again.' To accomplish this object, and in connection with the society, a Refuge has been fitted up, in which twenty-one boys are clothed, fed, lodged, educated, and taught tailoring, shoe-making, and shoe-blacking. Originally, the boys brought their dinners with them, and even breakfasts, which they ate before leaving head-quarters. But as it was found their appetites returned sharply before evening, the committee provided a refreshment-room on their premises, which was conducted by a matron who received the profit, and bore the risk of the department. Bread and butter, eggs, herrings, pies, oranges, pudding, coffee, and soup were there consumed by the boys after the labours of the day were over. This also kept the so-disposed shoe-blacks from adjourning to neighbouring coffee-shops to supper.

To enter the Refuge above mentioned, a note of recommendation from the superintendent of the Ragged School must always be brought by the candidate for admission, when a colloquy to the following tenor takes place.

'Where do you live?'
'I live nowhere, sir.'
'Where do you sleep?'
'Anywhere, sir.'
'Where are your parents?'
'Dead, sir.'
'How long since?'
'Father about four years, mother one.'
'How have you got your living since?
'Doing anything, sir.'
'Can you read?'
'A little, sir.'
'How long since you had a shirt on?'
'I don't know, sir.'
'Are you willing to work?'
'Yes, sir.'
'Do you know how to get your living?'
'No, sir.'

But a letter of introduction from the superintendent of a Ragged School is not always essential. Misery and destitution have sometimes been the sole recommendation. 'We have now'—to quote again the gentleman above alluded to—'a very superior lad, who has been respectably brought up, and can read and write well; but who, on account of the loss of both parents, became quite destitute, and was brought to me by our boys in a perishing condition. We expect to make an inspector of him.'

If approved of, the boy is admitted at once, conducted to the dormitory, washed, fed, housed, equipped in the blue uniform, and instructed in the crafts we have already enumerated. Since the formation of the Refuge, 322 boys have been admitted, of whom 169 left it of their own accord, 47 were dismissed as incorrigible, and 106 were reclaimed, of whom several were once reputed thieves. These are important facts; and the committee, in a report recently published, express their belief that it cannot be shewn by any other society that 106 boys have been effectually reclaimed from the streets, and put into the way of obtaining their own living so cheaply—the average cost of each boy being only L.1. A great feature in the society again is, that the boys help to pay the expenses incurred in reclaiming them.

We have now briefly to notice the means adopted to enforce discipline and to carry out this beneficial system of training. It is not to be supposed that this is by any means an easy task; not only great patience but great tact must be employed, in dealing with the variety of characters that are introduced to the managers or superintendents of the societies. Of course, the chief object is to gain the child's affections, and to make him sensible of the obligations he is under to those who thus interest themselves so much in his behalf. He is also shewn how much it is his own interest to co-operate with those who undertake to provide for his future and direct his steps. But this is not altogether sufficient. A regular course of control is necessary, and it has been found that this cannot work without a system of rewards and punishments: *Fines*, for late hours, absence, or other misbehaviour; *Degradation*, from one division to a lower, either permanently or for a limited period; *Suspension* from work for a fixed time. Generally speaking, the boys acquiesce in the justice of their sentence, and willingly submit to its execution. The system of rewards consists in giving *prizes* in money, varying from sixpence to half-a-crown, and amounting in all to ten shillings, presented to the two boys in each division whose monthly earnings have been largest; *medals*, presented to the first boys in the three first divisions; and *promotion*, from a lower to a higher division. The results of this system proved its effectiveness in every respect. So far back as June 1852, Mr M'Gregor, one of the first members of the committee which organised the Original Ragged School Shoe-black Society, when examined before a select committee of the House of Commons on 'criminal and destitute juveniles,' declared it as his conviction, founded on experience, 'that boys could be taken as nuisances from the streets, and as criminals from the jails, and be made useful servants to the public, able to earn an honest livelihood during their reformation, and finally become religious and respectable lads, or leave as useful colonists.' The experience of subsequent years corroborates still more strongly and permanently this report. When further examined on the means employed to achieve this noble object, and the character of the work to which the boys were set, Mr M'Gregor replied, 'that the nature of the occupation was comparatively unimportant, if industry were immediately rewarded, and not merely enforced; if permanent employment were held out in prospect; if good and bad conduct were made directly apparent to the other lads and to the managers; emulation promulgated by classification; honesty, by constant money transactions where trust is involved; economy, by daily saving; attention to respectability of appearance, by enforcing proper clothing; punctuality, by fixed hours; steadiness, by requiring prolonged attention to duties at a certain post; learning, by promoting to stations requiring it; love of home, by providing for those who would be otherwise without a shelter.' It is highly gratifying to our natures to know that youths who, but a year or two since, perhaps but a few months since, were wandering about the streets pilfering and begging, have been so transformed in their conduct and affections; and that of these, a large number support their parents—parents who probably have entirely neglected them, and through whose immoral and dissipated habits they had themselves been obliged to roam about, aimless, houseless, and breadless.

To shew the special adaptability of the shoe-blacking system to carry out this great work, it is only necessary to give a short account of two employments which we have already alluded to, and which, starting almost contemporaneously with the above society, or rather issuing from it about the same time, ceased shortly after—the Broomers, a name invented for the occasion, and the Messengers. The duty of each broomer was to keep the pavements clean in front of twenty shops. Regent Street, Bond Street, and Waterloo Place, were divided into districts; and on the 10th of November 1851, boys were sent out. By the 12th of January following, twenty-one boys were employed; but from this time their number was gradually reduced, until in the end of March the enterprise was altogether abandoned, it being found insufficiently remunerative; though, we believe, the pecuniary difficulties were not so much the motive for its abandonment as the impossibility of preserving so strict a discipline over the broomers as over the shoe-blacks. In 1852, the other variety of labour was introduced into the working of the society. Four boys were employed as messengers, dressed in blue trousers and scarlet jackets, and provided with a check-book, to enter the addresses of parcels, and to give receipts if required. The sum charged was twopence for the first half-mile, and one penny for every additional half-mile; the boys being stationed at the Bank, the Exchange, and the Electric Telegraph Offices. The committee promoted to this employment the most industrious boys, who had in their banks a sufficient sum to guarantee the value of parcels to the amount of L.3. The Electric Telegraph Company occasionally intrusted the messengers with their dispatches; and one of them was employed by the Crystal Palace Company to distribute their circulars. A respectable publisher also employed four of the society's boys for several weeks in sending out the copies of a new serial. Notwithstanding this patronage, the occupation of a messenger was found to be less remunerative than that of a shoe-black, especially as it was necessary to promote to that office the most active and intelligent of the boys. Towards the close of 1852, therefore, this project was abandoned.

Since that time, the committee have confined the employment of the boys to the ordinary occupation of a shoe-black—with what results, we have endeavoured to shew.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XIV.—LOVE-THOUGHTS.

A DREAD feeling is jealousy, mortified vanity, or whatever you may designate the disappointment of love. I have experienced the sting of shame, the blight of broken fortune, the fear of death itself; yet none of these ever wrung my heart so rudely as the pang of an unreciprocated passion. The former are but transient trials, and their bitterness soon has an end. Jealousy, like the tooth of the serpent, leaves its poison in the sting, and long and slow is the healing of its wound. Well knew he this, that master of the human heart: Iago's prayer was not meant for mockery.

To drown my mortification, I had drunk wine freely at the ball; and on returning home, had continued my potations with the more fiery spirit of 'Catalan.' By this means I gained relief and sleep, but only of short duration. Long before day, I was awake—awake to the double bitterness of jealousy and shame—awake to both mental and physical pain, for the fumes of the vile stuff I had drunk wrecked my brain, as though they would burst open my skull. An ounce of opium would not have set me to sleep again, and I tossed in my couch like one labouring under delirium.

Of course the incidents of the preceding night were uppermost in my mind. Every scene and action that had occurred, were as plainly before me, as if I was again witnessing them. Every effort to alienate my thoughts, and fix them upon some other theme, proved vain and idle; they ever returned to the same circle of reflections, in the centre of which was Isolina de Vargas! I thought of all that had passed, of all she had said. I remembered every word. How bitterly I remembered that scornful laugh!—how bitterly that sarcastic smile, when the double mask was removed!

The very remembrance of her beauty pained me! It was now to me as to Tantalus the crystal waters, never to be tasted. Before, I had formed hopes, had indulged in prospective dreams: the masquerade adventure had dissipated them. I no longer hoped, no longer permitted myself to dream of pleasant times to come: I felt that I was scorned.

This feeling produced a momentary revulsion in my thoughts. There were moments when I hated her, and vengeful impulses careered across my soul.

These were fleeting moments: again before me rose that lovely form, that proud grand spirit, in the full entirety of its power, and again my soul became absorbed in admiration, and yielded itself to its hopeless passion. It was far from being my first love, and, thus experienced, I could reason upon it. I felt certain it was to be the strongest and stormiest of my life.

I know of three loves distinct in kind and power. First, when the passion is reciprocated—when the heart of the beloved yields back thought for thought, and throb for throb, without one reserved pulsation. This is bliss upon earth—not always long-lived—ending perchance in a species of sublimated friendship. To have is no longer to desire.

The second is love entirely unrequited—love that never knew word or smile of encouragement, no soft whisper to fan it into flame, no ray of hope to feed upon. Such dies of inanition, the sooner that its object is out of the way, and absence will conquer it in time.

The third is the love that 'dotes yet doubts,' that doubts but never dies—no, never. The jealousy that pains, only sustains it; it lives on, now happy in the honeyed conviction of triumph, now smarting under real or fancied scorn—on, on, so long as its object is accessible to sight or hearing! No matter how worthless that object may be or become—no matter how lost or fallen: love regards not this. It has nought to do with the moral part of our nature. Beauty is the shrine of its worship, and beauty is not morality.

In my own mind, I am conscious of three elements or classes of feeling: the *moral*, the *intellectual*, and what I may term the *passional*—the last as distinct from either of the other two as oil from spirits or water. To the last belongs love, which, I repeat again, has no sympathy with the moral feelings of our nature, but, alas! as one might almost believe, with their opposite. Even a plain but wicked coquette will captivate more hearts than a beautiful saint, and the brilliant murderess, ere now, has made conquests at the very foot of the scaffold!

It pains me to pronounce these convictions, derived as they are from experience. There is as little gain as pleasure in so doing, but popularity must be sacrificed at the shrine of truth. For the sake of effect, I shall not play false with philosophy.

Rough ranger as I was, I had studied psychology sufficiently to understand these truths; and I endeavoured to analyse my passion for this girl or woman—to discover *why* I loved her. Her physical beauty was of the highest order, and that no doubt was an element; but it was not all. Had I merely looked upon this beauty under ordinary circumstances—that is, without coming in contact with the spirit that animated it—I might have loved her, or I might not. It was the spirit, then, that had won me, though not alone. The same gem in a less brilliant setting might have failed to draw my admiration. I was the captive both of the spirit and the form. Soul and body had co-operated in producing my passion, and this may account for its suddenness and profundity. Why I loved her person, I knew—I was not ignorant of the laws of beauty—but why the spirit, I knew not. Certainly not from any idea I had formed of her high *moral* qualities; I had no evidence of these. Of her courage, even to daring, I had proof; of energy and determined will; of the power of thought, quick and versatile; but these are not *moral* qualities, they are not even *feminine!* True, she wept over her slain steed. Humanity? I have known a hardened *lorette* weep bitter tears for her tortoise-shell cat. She refused to take from me my horse. Generosity? She had a thousand within sight. Alas! in thus reviewing all that had passed between myself and the beautiful Isolina, in search of her moral qualities, I met with but little success!

Mystery of our nature! I loved her not the less! And yet my passion was pure, and I do not believe that my heart was wicked. Mystery of our nature! He who reads all hearts alone can solve thee!

I loved without reason; but I loved now without hope. Hope I had before that night. Her glance through the turrets—her note—its contents—a word or two at other times, had inspired me with hopes, however faint they were. The incident in the ball-room had crushed them.

Ijurra's dark face kept lowering before me; even in my visions he was always by her side. What was between the two? Perhaps a nearer relationship than that of cousin? Perhaps they were affianced? Married?

The thought maddened me.

I could rest upon my couch no longer. I rose and sought the open air; I climbed to the azotea, and paced it to and fro, as the tiger walks his cage. My thoughts were wild, and my movements without method. To add to the bitterness of my reflections, I now discovered that I had sustained a loss—not in property, but something that annoyed me still more. I had lost the order and its enclosure—the note of Don Ramon. I had dropped them on the day in which they were received, and I believed in the patio of the hacienda, where they must have been picked up at once. If by Don Ramon himself, then all was well; but if they had fallen into the hands of some of the leathern-clad herdsmen, ill affected to Don Ramon, it might be an awkward affair for that gentleman—indeed for myself. Such negligence would scarcely be overlooked at head-quarters; and I had ill-forebodings about the result. It was one of my soul's darkest hours.

From its very darkness I might have known that light was near, for the proverb is equally true in the moral as in the material world. Light *was* near.

CHAPTER XV.

AN ODD EPISTLE.

Breakfast I hardly tasted. A *taso* of chocolate and a small sugared cake—the *desayuna* of every Mexican—were brought, and these served me for breakfast. A glass of cognac and a Havanna were more to the purpose, and helped to stay the wild trembling of my nerves. Fortunately, there was no duty to perform, else I could ill have attended to it. I remained on the azotea till near mid-day. The storm raging within prevented me from taking note of what was passing around. The scenes in the plaza, the rangers and their steeds, the 'greasers' in their striped blankets, the *Indias* squatted on their *petates*, the pretty poblanas, were all unnoticed by me. At intervals, my eyes rested upon the walls of the distant dwelling; it was not so distant but that a human form could have been distinguished upon its roof, had one been there. There was none, and twenty, ay, fifty times, did I turn away my disappointed gaze.

About noon, the sergeant of the guard reported that a Mexican wished to speak with me: mechanically, I gave orders for the man to be sent up; but it was not until he appeared before me that I thought of what I was doing.

The presence of the Mexican at once roused me from my unpleasant reverie. I recognised him as one of the vaqueros of Don Ramon de Vargas—the same I had seen on the plain during my first interview with Isolina.

There was something in his manner that betokened him a messenger. A folded note, which he drew from under his jerkin—after having glanced around to see whether he was noticed—confirmed my observation.

I took the note. There was no superscription, nor did I stay to look for one. My fingers trembled as I tore open the seal. As my eye rested on the writing and recognised it, my heart throbbed so as almost to choke my utterance. I muttered some directions to the messenger; and to conceal my emotion from him, I turned away and proceeded to the furthest corner of the azotea before reading the note. I called back to the man to go below, and wait for an answer; and, then relieved of his presence, I read as follows:

'*July* 18—.

'*Gallant* capitan! allow me to bid you a *buenas dias*, for I presume that, after the fatigues of last night, it is but morning with you yet. Did you dream of your sable belle? "Poor devil!" Ha, ha, ha! *Gallant* capitan!'

I was provoked at this mode of address, for the 'gallant' was rendered emphatic by underlining. It was a letter to taunt me for my ill behaviour. I felt inclined to fling it down, but my eye wandering over the paper, caught some words that induced me to read on.

'*Gallant* capitan! I had a favourite mare. How fond I was of that creature you may understand, who are afflicted by a similar affection for the noble Moro. In an evil hour, your aim, too true, alas! robbed me of my favourite, but you offered to repay me by *robbing* yourself, for well know I that the black is to you the *dearest object upon earth*. Indeed, were I the lady of your love, I should ill brook such a divided affection! Well, mio capitan, I understood the generous sacrifice you would have made, and forbade it; but I know you are desirous of cancelling your debt. It is in your power to do so. Listen!'

Some *hard* conditions I anticipated would follow; I recked not of that. There was no sacrifice I was not ready to make. I would have dared any deed, however wild, to have won that proud heart, to have inoculated it with the pain that was wringing my own. I read on:

'There is a horse, famed in these parts as the "white steed of the prairies" (*el cavallo blanco de los llanos*). He is a wild-horse, of course; snow-white in colour, beautiful in form, swift as the swallow—— But why need I describe to you the "white steed of the prairies?" you are a Tejano, and must have heard of him ere this? Well, mio capitan, I have long had a desire—a frantic one, let me add—to possess this horse. I have offered rewards to hunters—to our own vaqueros, for he sometimes appears upon our plains—but to no purpose. Not one of them can capture, though they have often seen and chased him. Some say that he *cannot be taken*, that he is so fleet as to gallop, or rather *glide* out of sight in a glance, and that, too, on the open prairie! There are those who assert that he is a phantom, *un demonio!* Surely so beautiful a creature cannot be the devil? Besides, I have always heard—and, if I recollect aright, some one said so last night—that the devil was *black*. "Poor devil!" Ha, ha, ha!'

I rather welcomed this allusion to my misconduct of the preceding night, for I began to feel easier under the perception that the whole affair was thus treated in jest, instead of the anger and scorn I had anticipated. With pleasanter presentiments I read on:

'To the point, mio capitan. There are some incredulous people who believe the white steed of the prairies to be a myth, and deny his existence altogether. *Carrambo!* I know that he *does* exist, and, what is more to my present purpose, he is—or *was*, but two hours ago—within ten miles of where I am writing this note! One of our vaqueros saw him near the banks of a beautiful arroyo river, which I know to be his favourite ground. For reasons known to me, the vaquero did not either chase or molest him; but in breathless haste brought me the news.

'Now, capitan, gallant and grand! there is but one who can capture this famed horse, and that is your puissant self. Ah! *you have made captive what was once as wild and free.* Yes! *you* can do it—you and Moro!

'Bring me the white steed of the prairies! I shall cease to grieve for poor Lola. I shall forgive you that *contratiempo*. I shall forgive all—even your rudeness to my double mask. Ha, ha, ha! Bring me the white steed! the white steed! ISOLINA.'

As I finished reading this singular epistle, a thrill of pleasure ran through my veins. I dwelt not on the oddness of its contents, thoroughly characteristic of the writer. Its meaning was clear enough.

I *had* heard of the white horse of the prairies—what hunter or trapper, trader or traveller, throughout all the wide borders of prairie-land, has not? Many a romantic story of him had I listened to around the blazing camp-fire—many a tale of German-like *diablerie*, in which the white horse played hero. For nearly a century has he figured in the legends of the prairie 'mariner'—a counterpart to the Flying Dutchman—the 'phantom-ship' of the forecastle. Like this, too, ubiquitous—seen to-day scouring the sandy plains of the Platte, to-morrow bounding over the broad llanos of Texas, a thousand miles to the southward!

That there existed a white stallion of great speed and splendid proportions—that there were twenty, perhaps a hundred such—among the countless herds of wild-horses that roam over the great plains, I did not for a moment doubt. I myself had seen and chased more than one that might have been termed 'a magnificent animal,' and that no ordinary horse could overtake; but the one known as the 'white steed of the prairies' had a peculiar marking, that distinguished him from all the rest—*his ears were black!*—only his ears, and these were of the deep colour of ebony. The rest of his body, mane and tail, was white as fresh-fallen snow.

It was to this singular and mysterious animal that the letter pointed; it was the black-eared steed I was called upon to capture. The contents of the note were specific and plain. One expression alone puzzled me: '*You have made captive what was once as wild and free.*' What? I asked myself. I scarce dared to give credence to the answer that leaped like an exulting echo from out my heart!

There was a postscript, of course; but this contained only 'business.' It gave minuter details as to when, how, and where the white horse had been seen, and stated that the bearer of the note—the vaquero who had seen him—would act as my guide.

I pondered not long upon the strange request. Its fulfilment promised to recover me the position, which but a moment before I had looked upon as lost for ever. I at once resolved upon the undertaking.

'Yes, lovely Isolina! if horse and man can do it, ere another sun sets, you shall be mistress of the *white steed of the prairies!*'

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MANADA.

In half an hour after, with the vaquero for my guide, I rode quietly out of the rancheria. A dozen rangers followed close behind; and having crossed the river at a ford nearly opposite the village, we struck off into the *chapparal* on the opposite side.

The men whom I had chosen to accompany me were all old hunters, fellows who could 'trail' and 'crease' with accurate aim. I had confidence in their skill, and, aided by them, I had great hopes we should find the game we were in search of. My hopes, however, would not have been so sanguine but for another circumstance. It was this: Our guide had informed me, that when he saw the white steed, the latter was in company with a large drove of mares—a *manada*—doubtless his harem. He would not be likely to separate from them, and even if these had since left the ground, they could be the more easily 'trailed,' in consequence of their numbers. Indeed, but for this prospect, our wild-horse hunt would have partaken largely of the character of a 'wild-goose chase.' The steed, by all accounts of him, might have been seen upon one arroyo to-day, and by the banks of some other stream, a hundred miles off, on the morrow. The presence of his manada offered some guarantee, that he might still be near the ground where the vaquero had marked him. Once found, I trusted to the swiftness of my horse, and my own skill in the use of the lazo.

As we rode along, I revealed to my following the purpose of the expedition. All of them knew the white steed by fame; one or two averred they had seen him in their prairie wanderings. The whole party were delighted at the idea of such a 'scout,' and exhibited as much excitement as if I was leading them to a skirmish with guerilleros!

The country through which we passed was at first a dense chapparal, consisting of the various thorny shrubs and plants for which this part of Mexico is so celebrated. The greater proportion belonged to the family of *leguminosæ—robinias*, *gleditschias*, and the Texan acacias of more than one species, there known as *mezquite*. Aloes, too, formed part of the undergrowth, to the no small annoyance of the traveller—the wild species known as the *lechuguilla*, or pita-plant, whose core is cooked for food, whose fibrous leaves serve for the manufacture of thread, cordage, or cloth—while its sap yields by distillation the fiery *mezcal*. Here and there, a tree yucca grew by the way, its fascicles of rigid leaves reminding one of the plumed heads of Indian warriors. Some I saw with edible fruits growing in clusters, like bunches of bananas. Several species are there of these fruit-bearing yuccas in the region of the Rio Grande, as yet unknown to the scientific botanist. I observed also the *palmilla*, or soap-plant, another yucca whose roots yield an excellent substitute for soap; and various forms of cactus—never out of sight on Mexican soil—grew thickly around, a characteristic feature of the landscape. Plants of humbler stature covered the surface, among which the syngenesists predominated; while the fetid *artemisia*, and the still more disagreeably odorous creosote plant (*Larrea Mexicana*), grew upon spots that were sandy and arid. Pleasanter objects to the eye were the scarlet panicles of the *Fouquiera splendens*, then undescribed by botanists, and yet to become a favourite of the arboretums. I was in no mood for botanising at the time, but I well remember how I admired this elegant species—its tall culm-like stems, surmounted by panicles of brilliant flowers, rising high above the level of the surrounding thicket, like banners above a host. Not that I possess the refined taste of a lover of flowers, and much less then; but cold must be the heart that could look upon the floral beauty of Mexico without remembering some portion of its charms. Even the *rudest* of my followers could not otherwise than admire; and once or twice, as we journeyed along, I could hear them give utterance to that fine epithet of the heart's desire, 'Beautiful!'

As we advanced, the aspect changed. The surface became freer of jungle; a succession of glade and thicket; in short, a 'mezquite prairie.' Still advancing, the 'openings' became larger, while the timbered surface diminished in extent, and now and then the glades joined each other without interruption.

We had ridden nearly ten miles without drawing bridle, when our guide struck upon the trail of the manada. Several of the old hunters, without dismounting, pronounced the tracks to be those of wild *mares*, which they easily distinguished from *horse* tracks. Their judgment proved correct; for following the trail but a short distance further, we came full in sight of the drove, which the vaquero confidently pronounced was the manada we were in search of!

So far our success equalled our expectations; but to get sight of a *caballada* of wild-horses, and to capture its swiftest steed, are two things of very unequal difficulty. This fact my anxiously beating heart and quickly throbbing pulse revealed to me at the moment. It would be difficult to describe the mingled feelings of anxious doubt and joyous hope that passed through my mind, as from afar off I gazed upon that shy herd, still unconscious of our approach.

The prairie upon which the mares were browsing was more than a mile in width, and, like those we had been passing through, it was surrounded by the low chapparal forest, although there were avenues that communicated with other openings of a similar kind. Near its centre was the manada. Some of the mares were quietly browsing upon the grass, while others were frisking and playing about, now rearing up as if in combat, now rushing in wild gallop, their tossed manes and full tails flung loosely upon the wind. Even in the distance we could trace the full rounded development of their bodies, and their smooth coats, glistening under the sun, denoted their fair condition. They were of all colours known to the horse, for in this the race of the Spanish horse is somewhat peculiar. There were bays, and blacks, and whites—the last being most numerous. There were grays, both iron and roan, and duns with white manes and tails, and some of a mole colour, and not a few of the kind known in Mexico as *pintados* (piebalds)—for spotted horses are not uncommon among the mustangs—all of course with full manes and tails, since the mutilating shears of the jockey had never curtailed their flowing glories.

But where was the lord of this splendid harem?—where the steed? This was the thought that was uppermost in the mind of all, the question upon every tongue. Our eyes wandered over the herd, now here, now there. White horses there were, numbers of them, but it needed but a glance to tell that the 'steed of the prairies' was not there.

We eyed each other with looks of disappointment. Even my companions felt that; but a far more bitter feeling was growing upon me as I gazed upon the leaderless troop. Could I have captured and carried back the whole drove, the present would not have purchased one smile from Isolina. The steed was not among them!

He might still be in the neighbourhood; or had he forsaken the manada altogether, and gone far away over the wide prairie in search of new conquests? The vaquero believed he was not far off. I had faith in this man's opinion, who, having passed his life in the observation of wild and half-wild horses, had a perfect knowledge of their habits. There was hope then. The steed might be near; perhaps lying down in the shade of the thicket; perhaps with a portion of the manada or some favourite in one of the adjacent glades. If so, our guide assured us we should soon have him in view. He would soon bring the steed upon the ground.

How? Simply by startling the mares, whose neigh of alarm would be heard from afar.

The plan seemed feasible enough; but it was advisable that we should surround the manada before attempting to disturb them, else they might gallop off in the opposite direction before any of us could get near. Without delay, we proceeded to effect the 'surround.'

The chapparal aided us by concealing our movements; and in half an hour we had deployed around the prairie.

The drove still browsed and played. They had no suspicion that a cordon of hunters was being formed around them, else they would have long since galloped away. Of all wild-creatures, the shiest is the wild-horse; the deer, the antelope, and buffalo are far less fearful of the approach of man. The mustang seems to understand the doom that awaits him in captivity. One could almost fancy that the runaways from the settlements—occasionally seen amongst them—had poured into their ears the tale of their hardship and long endurance.

I had myself ridden to the opposite side of the prairie, in order to be certain when the circle was complete. I was now alone, having dropped my companions at intervals along the margin of the timber. I had brought with me the bugle, with a note or two of which I intended to give the alarm to the mares. I had placed myself in a clump of mezquite trees, and was about raising the horn to my lips, when a shrill scream from behind caused me to bring down the instrument, and turn suddenly in my seat. For a moment, I was in doubt as to what could have produced such a singular utterance, when a second time it fell on my ear, and I then recognised it. It was the neigh of the prairie stallion!

Near me was a break in the thicket, a sort of avenue leading out into another prairie. In this I could hear the hoof-stroke of a horse going at a gallop. As fast as the underwood would allow, I pressed forward and came out upon the edge of the open ground; but the sun, low down, flashed in my eyes, and I could see no object distinctly. The tread of the hoofs and the shrill neighing still rang in my ears. Presently, the dazzling light no longer quite blinded me; I shaded my eyes with my hand, and could perceive the form of a noble steed stretching in full gallop down the avenue, and coming in the direction of the manada. Half-a-dozen springs brought him opposite; the beam was no longer in my eyes; and as he galloped past, I saw before me the 'white steed of the prairies.' There was no mistaking the marks of that splendid creature: there was the snow-white body, the ears of jetty blackness, the blue muzzle, the red projected nostril, the broad oval quarters, the rounded and symmetric limbs—all the points of an incomparable steed!

Like an arrow, he shot past. He did not arrest his pace for an instant, but galloped on in a direct line for the drove.

The mares had answered his first signal with a responsive neigh; and tossing up their heads, the whole manada was instantly in motion. In a few seconds, they stood at rest again, *formed in line*—as exact as could have been done by a troop of cavalry—and fronted their leader as he galloped up. Indeed, standing as they were, with their heads high in air, it was easy to fancy them mounted men in the array of battle; and often have the wild-horses been mistaken for such by the prairie traveller!

Concealment or stratagem could no longer avail; the chase was fairly up. Speed and the lazo must now decide the result; and with this conviction, I gave Moro the spur, and bounded into the open plain. The neighing of the steed had signaled my companions, who shot almost simultaneously out of the timber, and spurred towards the drove, yelling as they came.

I had no eyes for aught but the white steed, and after him I directed myself. On nearing the line of mares, he halted in his wild gallop, twice reared his body upward, as if to reconnoitre the ground; and then, uttering another of his shrill screams, broke off in a direct line towards the edge of the prairie. A wide avenue leading out in that direction seemed to have guided his instincts. The manada followed, at first galloping in line; but this was soon broken, as the swifter individuals passed ahead of the others, and the drove became strung out upon the prairie.

Through the opening now swept the chase—the pursuers keenly plying the spur, the pursued straining every muscle to escape.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HUNT OF THE WILD-HORSE.

My gallant horse soon gave proof of his superior qualities. One after another of my companions was passed; and as we cleared the avenue and entered a second prairie, I found myself mixing with the hindmost of the wild mares. Pretty creatures some of them were; and upon any other occasion, I should have been tempted to fling a lazo over one of them, which I might easily have done. Then I only thought of getting them out of the way, as they were hindering my onward gallop. Before we had quite crossed the second prairie, I had forged into the front rank, and the mares, seeing I had headed them, broke to the right and left, and scattered away. All were now behind me, all but the white steed; he alone kept the course, at intervals uttering that same shrill neigh, as if to tantalise and lure me on. He was yet far in advance, and apparently running *at his ease!*

The horse I bestrode needed neither spur nor guidance; he saw before him the object of the chase, and he divined the will of his rider. I felt him *rising* under me like a sea-wave. His hoofs struck the turf without impinging upon it. At each fresh spring, he came up with elastic rebound, while his flanks heaved with the conscious possession of power.

Before the second prairie was crossed, he had gained considerably upon the white steed; but to my chagrin, I now saw the latter dash right into the thicket.

I found a path, and followed. My ear served to guide me, for the branches crackled as the wild-horse broke through. Now and then I caught glimpses of his white body, glancing among the green leaves.

Apprehensive of losing him, I rode recklessly after, now breasting the thicket, now tracing its labyrinthine aisles. I heeded not the thorny mimosas; my horse heeded them not; but large trees of the false acacia (*robinia*) stood thickly in the way, and their horizontal branches hindered me. Often was I obliged to bend flat to the saddle, in order to pass under them. All this was in favour of the pursued, and against the pursuer.

I longed for the open prairie, and to my relief it at length appeared, not yet quite treeless, but studded with timber 'islands.' Amid these the white steed was sailing off; but in passing through the thicket, he had gained ground, and was now a long way in advance of me. He was making for the open plain that lay beyond, and this shewed that it was his habit to trust to his heels for safety. Perhaps, with such a pursuer, he would have been safer to have kept the chapparal; but that remained to be seen.

In ten minutes' time, we had passed through the timber islands, and now the prairie—the grand, limitless prairie—stretched before us, far beyond the reach of vision.

On goes the chase over its grassy level—on till the trees are no longer behind us, and the eye sees nought but the green savannah, and the blue canopy arching over it—on, across the centre of that vast circle which has for its boundary the whole horizon!

The rangers, lost in the mazes of the chapparal, have long since fallen off; the mustangs have gone back; on all that wide plain, but two objects appear—the snow-white form of the flying steed, and the dark horseman that follows!

It is a long wild ride, a cruel gallop for my matchless Moro. Ten miles of the prairie have we passed—more than that—and as yet I have neither used whip nor spur. The brave steed needs no such prompting; he, too, has his interest in the chase—the ambition not to be outrun. My motive is different: I think only of the smiles of a woman; but such motive ere now has led to the loss of a crown or the conquest of a world. On, Moro! on! you must overtake him or die!

There is no longer an obstacle. He cannot hide from us here. The plain, with its sward of short grass, is level and smooth as the sleeping ocean; not an object intrudes upon the sight. He cannot conceal himself anywhere. There is still an hour of sunlight; he cannot hide from us in the darkness: ere that comes down, he shall be our captive. On, Moro! on!

On we glide in silence. The steed has ceased to utter his taunting neigh; he has lost confidence in his speed; he now runs in dread. Never before has he been so sorely pressed. He runs in silence, and so, too, his pursuer. Not a sound is heard but the stroke of the galloping hoofs—an impressive silence, that betokens the earnestness of the chase.

Less than two hundred yards separate us; I feel certain of victory. A touch of the spur would now bring Moro within range; it is time to put an end to this desperate ride. Now, brave Moro, another stretch, and you shall have rest!

I look to my lazo; it hangs coiled over the horn of my saddle: one end is fast to a ring and staple firmly riveted in the tree-wood. Is the loop clear and free? It is. The coil—is it straight? Yes; all as it should be.

I lift the coil, and rest it lightly over my bridle arm; I separate the noose, and hold it in my right hand. I am ready—— *God of Heaven! the steed?*

It was a wild exclamation, but it was drawn from me by no common cause. In arranging my lazo, I had taken my eyes from the chase, only for a moment: when I looked out again, *the horse had disappeared!*

With a mechanical movement I drew bridle, almost wrenching my horse upon his haunches; indeed, the animal had half halted of his own accord, and with a low whimper seemed to express terror. What could it mean? Where was the wild-horse?

I wheeled round, and round again, scanning the prairie on every side—though a single glance might have served. The plain, as already described, was level as a table; the horizon bounded the view: there was neither rock nor tree, nor bush nor weeds, nor even long grass. The sward was of the kind known upon the prairies as 'buffalo-grass' (*Sesleria dactyloides*), short when full grown, but then rising scarcely two inches above the soil. A serpent could hardly have found concealment under it, but a horse—— Merciful heaven! *where was the steed?*

An indefinable feeling of awe crept over me: I trembled; I felt my horse trembling between my thighs. He was covered with foam and sweat; so was I—the effects of the hard ride: but the cold perspiration of terror was fast coming upon me. The mystery was heavy and appalling!

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

From certain experiments recently made by Mr W. R. Grove, whose name is associated with the best of galvanic batteries, the way appears to be opening for new applications of electricity, and for investigations rich in promise alike to science and art. It was known years ago to some of the German savans, that a coin or medal placed on a smooth vitreous or metallic surface and electrised, would leave impressions on that surface which became visible when breathed on. From the latter peculiarity they were called 'roric figures;' and attempts were made to fix them by exposure to vapour of mercury or iodine, but without success. Where the Germans failed, Mr Grove has succeeded: 'believing, as I have for many years,' he says, 'that electricity is nothing else than motion or change in matter, a force and not a fluid, I have made experiments to ascertain whether similar effects take place in cases where electrical light is visible upon insulated surfaces only.'

We give a brief sketch of the experiments, adopting Mr Grove's description where it suits our purpose. Two plates of window-glass, about three inches square, were dipped in nitric acid, then washed, and dried with a clean silk handkerchief, and coated on the outside with pieces of tinfoil a little smaller than the glass. A piece of a printed hand-bill was laid between the plates thus prepared; the tinfoil coatings were connected with the secondary terminals of a Ruhmkorff's coil, and removed after a few minutes' electrisation. Now, 'the interior surface of the glass when breathed on, shewed with great beauty the printed words which had been opposite it, these appearing as though etched on the glass, or having a frosted appearance; even the fibres of the paper were beautifully brought out by the breath, but nothing beyond the margin of the tinfoil.' These impressions were fixed by holding them over hydrofluoric acid—powdered fluor spar and sulphuric acid slightly warmed in a leaden dish.

'I now cut out of thin white letter-paper,' proceeds Mr Grove, 'the word Volta, and placed it between the plates of glass. They were submitted to electrisation as before, and the interior surface of one of them, without the paper letters, was subsequently exposed in the hydrofluoric acid vapour; the previously invisible figures came out perfectly, and formed a permanent and perfectly accurate etching of the word Volta, as complete as if it had been done in the usual mode by an etching ground. This, of course, could be washed and rubbed to any extent without alteration; and the results I have obtained give every promise for those who may pursue this as an art, of producing very beautiful effects, enabling Silhouette designs, or even fine engravings, to be copied on glass, &c.'

We cite yet another experiment, as it brings photography into play. A plate on which the invisible image was impressed, was immersed in a bath of nitrate of silver, in the usual manner as for a photograph. 'It was then held opposite a window for a few seconds, and taken back into the darkened room; and on pouring over it a solution of pyrogallic acid, the word Volta, and the border of the glass beyond the limits of the tinfoil, were darkened, and came out with perfect distinctness, the other parts of the glass having been, as it were, protected by electrisation from the action of light. The figures were permanently fixed by a strong solution of hyposulphate of soda.'—Mr Grove has published an account of his various experiments in the *Philosophical Magazine*.

Professor Hansen of Seeberg, one of the foreign members of the Royal Society, and a renowned astronomer, has recently completed a series of elaborate calculations based on observations of the moon, which clear away some of the difficulties of the question as regards our satellite. His published results are for the most part abstruse and technical—appreciable only by astronomers: but among them occur certain matters of popular interest. He finds, for example, that the moon's centre of gravity is 59,000 mètres (about forty miles) from the centre of its mass, a difference sufficiently great to produce an effect. 'Hence,' he argues, 'we ought to consider the two hemispheres of the moon, of which one is visible and the other invisible for us, as essentially different with regard to their levels, their climates, and all that depends thereon. Seeing that the lines of level regulate themselves principally with reference to the centre of gravity, the hemisphere of the moon turned towards us, rises much more beyond the mean level than the opposite hemisphere; and although the former presents itself to us as a sterile region, void of atmosphere, and of animal life, we cannot conclude it the same for the latter. The mean level should prevail round the edge, as seen by us; and in truth we cannot say but that some traces of atmosphere do shew themselves.'

A paper 'On the Laws of the Strength of Wrought and Cast Iron,' by Mr W. Bell, has been read before the Institution of Civil Engineers. The subject is one eminently interesting to the profession. The author has taken all the trustworthy experiments hitherto made, and comparing them with each other, deduces certain laws conformable with the prevalent theory. The phenomena of tension, compression, and breakage of the several kinds of iron are examined and discussed, and exemplified by mathematical formulæ. Mr Bell considers the opinion, that in an overstrained and breaking beam 'the neutral axis is at or above the top of the beam,' to be erroneous, and cites as evidence some of Sir David Brewster's experiments in passing polarised light through a piece of glass subjected to transverse strain. Here we see optics brought to bear in a question of mechanics. Leaving aside the dry and difficult technicalities, we give the propositions established by the paper. '1. That in experiments where the materials are but slightly strained, theory and experiment coincide; 2. That where the ordinary theory applies to the rupture of beams, and especially large beams of wrought iron, theory and experiment practically coincide; and last, that the ordinary theory of the strength of materials is more trustworthy than is generally supposed.' The subject is one of first-rate importance. A somewhat similar paper 'On the Strength of Iron Pillars,' has been read before the Royal Society by Mr Eaton Hodgkinson, giving the results of a long series of experiments made with his usual care. The cost of these experiments has been defrayed by a portion of the Royal Society's government grant, and the liberality of Mr Robert Stephenson.

Mr Basford's new method of purifying gas is attracting notice; instead of lime, he uses charcoal saturated at red-heat with lime-water, by which all the sulphur and ammonia are effectually stopped, while, as we hear, the quantity of gas obtained per ton of coal is all but doubled. On the continent, great improvements have been made in the manufacture of gas from wood: at Zurich, Heilbronn, Munich, and other places, it is largely used; and, according to report, five feet of wood-gas give as much light as six feet of coal-gas.—Extensive beds of clay, rich in aluminum, have been discovered in the state of New Jersey, United States, where our enterprising cousins will doubtless turn them to profit.—So much has the process of extracting the aluminum been simplified, that two kilogrammes of the metal are produced every day at a laboratory in the Rue St Jacques, Paris, at a cost of not more than 300 francs the kilogramme. The eagles on the standards of the French army are now made of aluminum, and with a considerable saving in the weight to be carried. —Chevreul has communicated to the Académie a paper setting forth researches made by him on certain ancient bronze statuettes brought from Egypt. We take one example. He placed a small completely oxidated effigy of Anubis in a porcelain tube, filled the tube with hydrogen gas, and raised it to a dull red heat. Presently, water, coloured green, was seen to condense in the bell-glass, and after letting the apparatus cool, 'I took out the statuette,' he says, 'completely revivified. I place it before the eyes of the Académie, together with the water and chlorhydric acid which represent the oxygen and chlorine of Egypt, now transformed at Paris by hydrogen into water and acid.' This reminds us of the admirably ingenious restoration of the Ninevite ivories by boiling them in gelatine, as suggested by Professor Owen.

A species of concrete (*béton*) in which ashes are a principal ingredient, has of late been advantageously introduced for building purposes in Paris. We have heard of a manufacturing firm who utilise most of their waste in the working up of this new material. So rapidly has this artificial stone been improved, that slabs for floors are now made seven mètres long by six mètres wide, which, being laid all in one piece, no beams or vaulting are necessary underneath. M. Coignet states: 'I fabricate in *bétons agglomerés*, as hard as the best stone, all the parts of a house—cellars, drains, paving-flags, sinks, walls, floors, roofs, exterior ornaments, without using wood or brick. By this process, the house, however large it may be, is a monolith; and this monolith equals, at least in solidity, masonry of hewn stone, and costs much less than the coarsest building in rubble.'

There is talk of adopting at Paris the process in use at Leicester for deodorising and utilising the sewage. The contents of the sewers being discharged into reservoirs, the solid matters are precipitated by means of lime, the water flows off clear, and the mud raised by an Archimedean screw, is dried in a centrifugal machine, and sold for manure in the form of bricks. A manufactory of *poudrette* has long existed at Paris, and it is believed that a handsome revenue may be derived from works on a larger scale, and a source of insalubrity at the same time neutralised.—Near Marseille, as we hear, an improved hydraulic-ram, beating on a cushion of water instead of a block of iron, has been found of great service in agricultural operations.

The selection of Professor William Thomson of Glasgow as one of the directors in the Atlantic Telegraph Company, is regarded as a satisfactory proof that the best scientific resources will be made available in the great submarine undertaking. In two short papers read before the Royal Society, the professor has thrown out new views on electro-telegraphy at long distances, developing a theory of signalising by pulsations. It is ingenious; but there remains to be seen how it will bear the test of practice.—At the meeting of German naturalists at Vienna last September, Gintl shewed that one telegraphic circuit will affect another which may happen to be near it, though the latter be altogether unconnected with the battery. Pass a current through the first, and the second, as demonstrated by the galvanometer, is visibly affected—in some as yet unexplained way through the earth. The cause will probably be discovered; meantime, the fact accounts for the confusion that sometimes arises in a net-work of telegraph lines, and suggests a means of simplification.

The dispute between Switzerland and Prussia has given another opportunity for testing the merits of a portable military telegraph, invented by M. Hipp, chief of the federal telegraph construction department—a remarkably effective yet simple instrument. It prints after the manner of Morse's; but the armature is regulated by a single spring only, worked by pressing a small knob. Attached to any line of wire, messages can be received and transmitted, and indeed all the usual operations of telegraphy carried on as with fixed instruments. It, however, weighs no more than twelve pounds complete with its case, which measures ten inches in length, and five inches in breadth and height. Within this small space it contains the transmitting apparatus, a supply of paper, the tools necessary for mounting and dismounting the instrument, an alarm which may be brought into the circuit at pleasure, two drawers holding troughs of gutta-percha of twelve compartments each, furnished with a pile of charcoal and amalgamated zinc. When moistened with dilute sulphuric acid, the action is complete, and little liable to disturbance: an instrument sent from Berne to Paris by diligence and railway, was quite fit for use on arrival.

Among the meteorological phenomena which occurred during December, there fell at Ambleside five inches of rain in twenty-nine hours on the 7th and 8th, whereby a sudden flood was produced in the valleys.—M. de Tessan says in a communication to the Société Philomatique, that fogs, clouds, mists, &c., are not vesicular vapours—in which opinion he is not alone—and that a true study of these appearances would clear up some doubtful points in meteorology.—The Abbé Raillard has laid a paper before the Académie on the same subject. He denies the truth of the vesicular vapour theory concerning clouds, and contends that the phenomenon in question depends on minute division. As gold, when beaten into leaf, falls slowly, so the more the surfaces of water are increased, the more slowly will the water fall. The resistance of air to a drop divided into a thousand parts, is a thousand times greater than to a single drop. Hence clouds are borne up by the friction of the atmosphere. That clouds should consist of vesicular vapour is, in the abbé's opinion, simply impossible: for if it were vesicular, it would be condensed; and if air were contained within the vesicles, the viscosity of the husk or shell would have to be something very different from that of water. This is a subject of especial interest to meteorologists, many of whom entertain similar views; and considering the activity which now prevails in their branch of study, we may look for important advances towards establishing it as a science.

The great oceanic survey, which we have from time to time mentioned, is making satisfactory progress. Reports with tabular details have already been received from some of the ships employed, and these will be discussed and the results brought out under the superintendence of Captain R. Fitzroy, Marine Department of the Board of Trade. The work of this survey, as will be remembered, was begun by the United States government; and our Admiralty now undertake a class of observations not embraced by the Americans, and highly beneficial consequences are hoped for from this co-operation of the two nations.—Lieutenant Maury recommends that the routes for ships crossing the Atlantic should be set off into what he calls 'lanes,' or pathways some twenty-five miles wide, one to be used by steamers going, the other by steamers returning—following the law of the road to prevent collisions. The breadth of the route travelled by the Cunard steamers is 300 miles; and it is clear that a lane fifty miles wide might be followed on either margin, and the risk of vessels meeting entirely avoided.

For some years, tide-observations have been made round the coasts of Ireland, for the purpose of discovering the various phenomena connected with the tides, currents, &c., and so facilitating navigation. Among the results obtained, there is one which at the first glance appears all but impossible. The Rev. Professor Haughton, of the Royal Irish Academy, has been enabled, by ingenious calculations based on those tide-observations, to infer the depth of the ocean. One of his conclusions, omitting fractions, is eleven miles; the other, five miles. The first is the depth of the vast central channel up which the great tidal wave rolls from the antarctic pole; the second is the mean depth of the whole Atlantic Ocean. We noticed some time ago a deep-sea sounding of seven miles, taken in the South Atlantic: this favours the professor's theory, and we shall perhaps learn, from the surveys and explorations now in progress, whether the deepest places have yet been sounded.

GOING TO THE PLAY IN CHINA.*

At the end of the street or alley we now entered, we observed a vast court surrounded with scaffoldings crowded with people, and at the further end, on a stage, the actors were to perform their parts—the river, forming the harbour of Canton, and its countless vessels, being the background of the picture.

To think of forcing our way through the crowd which encumbered the pit (the court), was perfectly useless; but thanks to the eloquence of M——, we entered a house, through which we were allowed to pass, on payment of half a *gourde* each; and in this manner succeeded in gaining one of the scaffoldings which was on a level with the first story of the house. Here we found several rows of benches, ranged one above the other, and selecting one of the highest, for the purpose of commanding a better view, we quietly took our seats.

The arrangement of the theatre was as follows:—An oblong enclosure was shut in on both sides by the boxes—covered galleries erected on wooden stakes—and here were assembled all those who paid for their admission. The stage, likewise supported on pillars, and covered, not with matting, like the gallery, but with painted cloth, formed one of the small corners of the right angle, and extended to the edge of the water; finally, a wall which joined the house through which we had entered, to another house opposite, completed the enclosure of the vast space, leaving only one door open for the crowd, who occupied the pit gratis.

At the moment of our arrival, a clever mountebank belonging to the *troupe* was filling up the pause between the acts by passing his body through the rounds of a ladder, jumping backwards over chairs, &c. As this was not a very exciting spectacle, I bestowed all my attention on the assembly among whom we now found ourselves, and wherein we were the only Europeans. I remarked, first of all, that among all those grave Chinese heads, surmounted by black leather caps or conical hats, were some really pretty women, whose *coiffures* were ornamented with flowers and gold pins. Their costume, though simple, was nevertheless scrupulously neat; but although they possessed the most diminutive feet in the world, these beauties, with their oblique eyes, must have belonged to an inferior class of society, as the higher orders of women never shew themselves in public. On one side, but at the extreme end, there were also three or four girls, whose friends seemed apprehensive lest we should approach them. At our feet, on the neighbouring benches, the good burghers of Canton, who had been probably sitting in the same place ever since the morning, were eating fruit and sweetmeats, which were supplied by ambulatory merchants; while others calmly smoked their metal pipes, whose narrow bowls will admit of only one pinch of tobacco at a time. A servant attends on each pipe, lighting it with a sort of phosphoric match; and this operation has constantly to be renewed, as a longer puff than usual is sufficient to exhaust the bowl.

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* This sketch is from the pen of a French naval officer, formerly stationed in the Chinese waters.

All these people interested me very much; but the really exciting feature of the place, and of which we never grew tired, was the pit. Picture to yourself some thousands of Chinese stripped down to their waists, in order to save their clothes—their long queues rolled round their heads, lest these ornamental appendages should be laid hold of by the crowd—squeezing and pushing each other until they form a compact mass—a single block of human beings. There lies before you a sea of shaven heads, all of the same form and colour, as if it was the head of a single man repeated a thousand times in a multiplying mirror. Now calm, now agitated by an imperceptible movement, the surface of this sea presents the appearance of a brown cloth, dotted with flat noses, and eyes that wink with desperate excitement. Suddenly the waves, lulled for a time, become agitated by some unknown cause, dash forwards, then backwards, with irresistible force, and a deafening sound—a confused murmur of voices laughing, shouting, crying, and menacing. The heavy stakes which support the stage are scarcely strong enough to resist the repeated shocks of these rolling masses. In vain those who are nearest endeavour, by catching at the stakes, to make buttresses of themselves, to stay the impetuous flood—their arms at length drop, and they are speedily carried away under the scaffolding down to the river.

If everything in this strange theatre appeared to us curious and new, our presence produced assuredly the same effect on the assembly; for besides the investigations of which we were continually the subject, every burst of applause, as the play went on, was accompanied by the pretty Chinese girls, the beatified smokers, and even the unfortunate wretches forming the troubled sea of bald heads, all turning their eyes upon us, and seemingly endeavouring to discover the degree of interest we took in the spectacle.

After the mountebank had finished his tricks, the actors, whose dressing-room is a tent at the back of the stage, appeared, much to the satisfaction of the public. Ranged on each side of a high table, they wait until the manager has explained to the audience the nature of the piece they are about to witness. As soon as this formality—very rigorously observed in China—is completed, three or four personages, covered with magnificent robes, whose cost is said to be enormous, come forth majestically upon the stage. One of these individuals, in order to mark his supreme dignity, wears in his hat, in the manner of horns, the two long and beautiful feathers of the tail of a Barbary pheasant. He seats himself at a table, while the grandees of his court, the ministers of state, the literati, and the populace at large, remain respectfully standing in two rows before him. I was surprised to find in these costumes the exact reproduction of those I had been accustomed to see in Chinese designs—the rich dresses studded with gold and silver, the heavy wings attached to the head-dress, the flags issuing from all parts of the person, and, above all, the grotesque painting, the lines of black, white, red, and yellow, which render the human face a diabolical mask. I was informed that this was a representation of the earliest Chinese courts; that the costumes were scrupulously correct; and that the fashion of the period was for the nobles, according to their several ranks, to besmear their faces so as to render them unrecognisable.

The emperor or chief who sat at the table, in the course of conversation, appeared to accuse one of the great personages of his court of some crime. This man, who was dressed in black, and apparently belonged rather to the literary than the warlike class, immediately left his place on hearing this accusation, and falling on his knees, muttered in a distressing tone of voice a long prayer, frequently striking his head against the earth. The judge, however, was immovable, and pronounced sentence; and at intervals during his speech, the guards and assistants uttered in chorus a sharp discordant cry, which signified, as I was informed, acquiescence in the will of the prince. All at once, a woman in tears—a man plays the part—rushes on the stage: she is the wife of the prisoner, and throwing herself on her knees before the judges, implores their mercy. But her supplications and tears are all in vain.

So terminated one act of the piece, which appeared to interest very much the spectators; whose applause quite stifled the sound of the tam-tams, gongs, and other discordant instruments—instruments, however, far less discordant and piercing than the voices of the actors. Indeed, the efforts of these unhappy beings were distressing to witness; their eyes seemed starting out of their heads, and the veins of their necks were swollen to such a degree as to induce serious fears for their safety. Fatigued at length with the tumult, new and interesting as the scene was, I found that I had been quite long enough at the play; and as night was coming on, we soon afterwards retired on board our ship.

VIGILS.

A young and yet unbelted knight he seems
Watching his maiden armour by the well.
He standeth in the moonlight dim and gray,
With darkness round, on which his steady gaze
Is bent, expectant of some issuing foe.
The light of a great purpose seems to burn
In those bright, lucid eyes—and the young lips
Are white and stern with high expectancy.
So stands he silent in the silent light,
Pale, fixed, and eager—guarding those pure arms
Which Honour on the morn shall gird him with,
And send him forth on quests of high emprise
Her tried and loyal knight.

O ardent youth
On whom the mail of manhood hath not fallen,
Has not this scene a teaching good for thee?
Thou too hast arms to guard, God-given and fair.
Watch that no stain obscure their lovely sheen:
Watch through the night-hours for the envious foe
Whose birth is of the darkness, yet whose power
Harms not him standing in the gentle light
Of strong and glowing truth. Then hopefully,
With bright, unsullied armour, go thou forth
To fight for Truth with many a world-born wrong
Which reigns supreme, and drinks of human tears
As monsters did of old. Go, and fear not;
Fight through the Night, till breaks the blessed Dawn—
When thou shalt see a shining Presence stand
To crown thee victor from thy arduous strife
In Life's great lists, and heir to glorious lands
Won by thy wounds, O soldier of the Cross!

M. A. D.

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THE BIRCH, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

WHEN Master Adolphus Smith, who has been detected in a suspicious situation in the school-orchard, is sentenced by the Rev. Kane M'Tawse of the academy, Birch Grove—who receives a limited number of young gentlemen at L.40 per annum—to a gentle titillation with a certain well-known instrument of juvenile torture, that apple-munching youth is not in the least aware of the very great antiquity of the punishment which his learned instructor delights to inflict. If young Smith but knew the ancient customs of the Lacedæmonians, and how boys like him were whipped for hours before an altar, making it a point of honour not to cry, there can be no doubt that the young gentleman would bear the sentence of M'Tawse with much greater equanimity than, we regret to say, is usually his practice. We may be permitted to hope that, as his classic knowledge extends, the veil of ignorance will be withdrawn, and the examples of these Spartan youths will ultimately take effect. But there are so many of this young gentleman's seniors in a state of ignorance on the subject as to demand inquiry, and we are astonished that some of our keen-eyed dealers in *Common Things* and *Things not Generally Known*, have not long ere this 'familiarly explained' the word Birch. Even in our most ponderous encyclopædias, we have to turn to the word 'Flagellant' before we can even partially satisfy our curiosity; and these learned repositories contain but a few dry sentences about 'a sect of religious fanatics.' This utter darkness as to such a thing as birch is most extraordinary; so extraordinary, that an ancient author recommends a work on the subject, and says that a time will sooner or later arrive when the discipline and flagellations which were in use for so many centuries, will be considered by the people so whimsical and absurd as to be unworthy of belief, although these same persons will be in the daily practice of other customs equally absurd and whimsical.

The origin and early development of flagellation is involved in great obscurity, and therefore it is hardly necessary to say that we have not the means of tracing out the first whipping which was inflicted, or the name and address of him or her who administered it. The literature of the subject, too, is exceedingly scanty; but we have a shrewd guess that the population of the world would not be very numerous when the practice was instituted. We will not at present, however, venture into any inquiry as to antediluvian discipline, although in these times of book-making, we have occasionally had thoughts of *doing* a work, to be entitled *Birch before the Flood*, illustrated with cuts, but will confine ourselves to the subject in its more modern aspect.

'Once upon a time' that we have read about, a tremendous dispute agitated the learned world as to whether whipping as a penance, or whipping as a punishment, was first introduced. One author contended for one view of the case, and his opponent fought to establish an opposite theory. The learning of each was flashed in the face of the other, and, as usual, the dispute ended by each thinking the other wrong. The relation of facts evolved by the controversialists, is so clouded in words and lost in old Latin quotations, or so frittered away in notes and commentaries, as to make it a task of no small difficulty to separate the corn from the chaff. We need not further allude to the controversy than merely to say, that all the probabilities of the case are in favour of punishment as first giving occasion for the use of the rod, although a strong case has been made out on behalf of those who hold a different opinion. We may remark upon the fondness of some of the ancient saints for the penance of flagellation, as detailed by those writers who take this view of the subject; one saint in particular was so fond of it, as to inflict upon himself, at one performance, a complement of 183,000 stripes! As, however, his daily allowance was 30,000 lashes, this immense number need not be much wondered at: things are only great by comparison, and this gentleman, it is hinted, wore a cuirass!

The ancient Romans carried the practice of flagellation further, perhaps, than any other nation; and we have been so fortunate as to find several authors who refer to their use of the scourge. Flagellatic emblems were common in every house; and the judges of the nation, with a desire to strike all evil-doers with terror, were surrounded with those instruments of chastisement. They had all different names: there was the *ferula*, a flat strap of leather, which was the mildest of all; then came the *scutica*, an instrument of twisted parchment, which was a degree more severe than the first named; after that there was the *flagella*, and the terrible *flagellum*, the severest of all, which was composed of plaited thongs of ox-leather. There were other instruments of punishment still more terrible than even these, such as balls of metal stuck full of small sharp points, and fastened to the end of long whips. So prevalent did the practice of whipping slaves become, that in course of time these unfortunates came to be named after the particular kind of flagellation they were made to undergo; in fact, the scourge was looked upon by the Romans as characteristic of dominion. The master or mistress of a Roman household in those days often exercised their terrible powers with unrelenting severity, and the poor slaves were not unfrequently scourged to death from a mere caprice. It was quite a sufficient excuse among the Roman ladies to whip a slave, if, as Juvenal expresses it, their nose displeased them; in other words, if they were not satisfied with the state of their own charms. Their wantonness of power was carried still further, if we may credit the same Juvenal. It was a customary thing with some of them, when they proposed having their hair dressed with both nicety and expedition, to have the dressing-maid stripped to the waist, ready for flagellation should she be guilty of any fault or mistake in performing her task. The fair termagants at last carried these cruelties to such a pitch, that in the beginning of the empire it was found necessary to restrain their licence. During the reign of the Emperor Adrian, a lady was banished for five years for inflicting undue cruelties on her female slaves. The smallest faults, such as breaking glasses or over-seasoning dishes, exposed these wretched serfs to grievous whippings, which were generally inflicted in presence of guests who happened to be entertained at table, as a means of affording a little diversion.

In addition to the flagellating customs of the ancient Romans, we may allude to a ceremony which was common among the Lacedæmonians, and called the Day of Flagellation, on account of the ceremony of whipping, in front of the altar of Diana, a number of boys, who freely submitted to that painful treatment. Various authors mention this fact. Plutarch says: 'Boys are whipped for a whole day, often to death, before the altar of Diana the Orthian, and they suffer it with cheerfulness, and even joy; nay, they strive with each other for victory; and he who bears up longest, and has been able to endure the greatest number of stripes, carries the day. This solemnity is called the contest of flagellations, and is celebrated every year in presence of the parents.' The reward to these martyrs of the birch was a stone; and statues similar to those which we erect to our poets and men of learning, were erected to their memory in the public places of Sparta.

The madness of the *Luperci* is scarcely worth alluding to; they were simply a disgust: and it is surprising that their festival, as it was called, should have existed for several hundred years after the introduction of Christianity. Their orgies have been recorded in the works of different authors. They were performed on occasions of particular solemnities, when the actors in them, reduced to a state of nudity, ran about striking each other with great fury. The following brief account of the sect is from the latest edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*:—'The first recorded instances of self-flagellation are isolated cases which happened about the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian era. From this date, the practice began to spread till the middle of the eleventh century, when, by the precepts and example of Damian, it came to be regarded by many religious persons as a sort of duty. The custom was very warmly opposed by the more liberal minds among the clergy, but it continued to spread in despite of all opposition; and soon after the middle of the thirteenth century, the devotees of the system, no longer content to mortify themselves in private, began to do so in public. Societies were now formed by which the doctrine of flagellation was promulgated throughout Europe; and the excesses into which they were frequently hurried by the ardour of their enthusiasm, excited the astonishment even of their contemporaries.'

Leaving the days of ancient Rome and the festival of the Lupercalia, we may, by a bold leap over a few troublesome centuries, arrive at a period much nearer our own day, when King Birch reigned with terrible severity over the religious public; when flagellation as a penance was a rage, and as a punishment was rigorously observed both in the king's palace and in meaner households. As an example of the discipline of the court, we may cite Brantome's quaint account of the misfortune which befell Mademoiselle de Limeuil, a maid of honour to the queen of Henry II. of France. This lady, as that author relates, was of high birth, great beauty of person, very handsome, very witty, and an adept in the use of her pen. She had been placed at court in the capacity of a lady-in-waiting, and she had been there but a few months when she tried her wit at the expense of the ladies and gentlemen by whom she was surrounded, and wrote a pasquinade in which all were made to appear. These verses, being ingeniously written, spread very fast, and people were curious to know who had composed such a satire. At last it was found out that Mademoiselle de Limeuil was the author; and as the queen, besides being a lady of serious temper, was grown disgusted with the great licence of writing that prevailed at court, and had determined at least to prevent any satire or lampoon from originating in her own household, orders were given, in consequence of which mademoiselle was rewarded for her verses by a whipping; and those young ladies in the suite of the queen who had been privy to the composition of the pasquinade, were likewise flagellated. The author we have cited thus moralises on the event: 'The instance of flagellation just now related, from which neither the beauty, nor the birth, nor the rank of the culprits, nor the brilliancy of their wit, their readiness at their pen, nor happy turn for satire, could screen them, clearly shews how much flagellations were in esteem in the times we speak of, and how much efficacy they were thought to possess for insuring those two great advantages—good order and decorum.' Such disciplines were not, however, confined in these noble houses to ladies: wholesome corrections of a similar kind were also frequently bestowed on the male retainers—the pages coming in for a large share of attention, and even strangers visiting the place were not exempted.

There has been a great deal of controversy on the subject of flagellation in nunneries, both as to such punishments being improper, and as to the right mode of infliction. We do not propose to enter at all into this very delicate part of the subject, but shall merely repeat a statement of Du Cange, who tells us of the different ceremonies observed in convents during the administration of discipline. He says that flagellations have to be suffered in the presence of the whole congregation—that in monasteries the discipline is administered by the hands of a 'vigorous brother;' and in the nunneries, by 'an elderly morose sister.'

It may be permitted us here to abridge from Delolme's *History of the Flagellants*, the following notices of the fathers of St Lazare, in Paris, whose school was known as 'the Seminary of the Good Boys:' These reverend fathers carried on an extensive business as general flagellators, the punishments being inflicted, as previously arranged, on parties carrying a recommendatory letter to this effect. Being situated in the metropolis, it was a most convenient place of punishment. Fathers or mothers who had undutiful sons, tutors who had unruly pupils, uncles who were intrusted with the education of ungovernable nephews, masters who had wickedly inclined apprentices, whom they durst not themselves undertake to correct, applied to the fathers of St Lazare, and had their wishes gratified. So regular was the trade carried on by the good fathers in that branch of business, that letters of the above kind were literally notes of hand payable at sight. Ludicrous incidents frequently arose out of their mode of doing business. Young culprits, who suspected what was in the wind, contrived to get some other person to take charge of their letter—with what result the reader may guess. Others who had letters to carry to the house of Lazare, the contents of which they did not mistrust, would often enough undesignedly charge other persons to deliver them; and the unfortunate bearer had no sooner presented his card of introduction, than he was straightway collared, prepared for the discipline, and rewarded for his good-nature by having administered to him a most excellent flagellation. When a lady had been slighted by her lover, she brought all her wit to bear upon his punishment, and frequently contrived to have it inflicted by the fathers at the seminary of St Lazare. An artful scheme was contrived to get the unfortunate individual, under some pretence or other, to call at the place, and the reverend disciplinarians, having been previously advised and paid, took good care to make the faithless gallant yield ample satisfaction to the injured fair one. The system of St Lazare ultimately led to such abuses as to attract the attention of the government of the period, who caused the seminary to be abolished.

We have not sufficient space to relate all the anecdotes of flagellation which have been handed down to us from the remote monastic ages, but the following is one which deserves to be recorded: A certain jovial friar, who had a keen eye to the good things of this world, found the means of procuring a number of fine dishes and a quantity of rare wine which his vows expressly forbade his class to partake of. He invited a select number of his brethren to share in the feast; and as it would have been attended with certain detection, if it had been laid out in any of their cells, they selected one of the large brewing-tuns of the monastery as a dining-room. As the feasting was held on several successive days, the abbot began to wonder at so many of the monks mysteriously disappearing at a certain hour. Being unable to find them either in their cells or in the chapel, he went himself on a voyage of discovery, and descending to the vaults, the savoury perfume of the dishes at once betrayed the secret dining of the jolly friars. The abbot slily took his measures, and at once made his entrance into the hidden apartment. As may be supposed, the brethren were prodigiously alarmed; but the abbot soon set them all at their ease, expostulated with them for making the feast a secret, begged leave to join their revelry, partook of the wine and the well-seasoned dishes, and spent the greater part of the afternoon in a most agreeable and convivial manner. At last the banquet terminated, and the monks dispersed, not without serious misgiving that something would come out of all this; and they were right. 'Next day,' says Delolme, 'a chapter having been summoned, the abbot desired the prior to fill his place, then standing forth, he accused himself of the sin he had committed the day before, and requested to be well flogged for it. The prior objected much to such a discipline being inflicted on the abbot, but the latter having insisted, his request was complied with. This proceeding greatly astonished his boon-companions, but there was no escape. They were compelled to follow the example of the abbot, and that astute individual had so arranged matters, as to insure each of the delinquents a sound flogging.'

There are many interesting anecdotes connected with the birch. In the French *Causes Célèbres*, we find the reports of various trials—arising out of the practice of flagellation—one in particular, where a noble lady waylaid another high personage of the same sex, and had her whipped by her servants. In London, about three hundred years ago, a clergyman was tried for administering to his housemaid 'a discipline after the manner of a school-boy,' and he even defended his conduct in a quarto pamphlet. The old practice of birching all the children of a family every time an execution took place, may be also referred to. This was a common practice some centuries ago, and its object was to keep the sufferers in mind of what had occurred. The still more recent plan of flogging the pauper children at the boundaries of the parish, in order that they might recollect them if disputes arose, seems a remnant of the same custom. One anecdote of 'penance' which we have heard is as follows: A lady, after having been to confession, was ordered to mortify her flesh, and to get some person to inflict upon her a hundred blows. The priest, however, forgot to say with what kind of instrument; and the lady, taking advantage of his oversight, caused her servant to flagellate her with a bunch of ostrich feathers. We may bid farewell to the ancient part of our subject by referring to the case of Clopinel, a court poet, who wrote a malicious libel on some of the ladies of the court. These beauteous maids determined to be revenged on the poet, and at a consultation which was held, it was unanimously determined that he should be flagellated. At a convenient time, he was seized and prepared for the rod, which the fair ones had determined to administer in person. He was saved, however, from the infliction by his presence of mind; 'piteously addressing the angry yet beauteous group around him, he humbly entreated that the first blow might be struck by the honourable damsel who felt herself the most aggrieved; and it is needless to add that not a lash was inflicted.'

A recent correspondence in the *Times* newspaper gives us the information that birch is not yet extinct in Great Britain, and that, having been banished from court, and almost fallen into disuse in our criminal code, it has found refuge in our great public schools, making Eton its head-quarters. We need not travel so far as Russia to laugh at flagellation in the nineteenth century, since we can have it at home. As the modern case has been made public through the columns of the London daily press, we need have no delicacy in alluding to it here. A gentleman, who had placed his two sons at Eton, heard that the eldest one had been flogged, and as this young man was eighteen years of age, the father thought the punishment very improper, and wrote to his boy instructions not again to submit to such a punishment. 'I consider such a humiliation as disgraceful both to the party receiving and inflicting it; therefore be on your guard how you expose yourself to so degrading an exhibition as that of your person on the whipping-block. It is fitting for the felon, but does not become a gentleman. Therefore, once more be on your guard, and should your love of fun or insubordination place you again in such a position, I desire that you will leave Eton, and not permit any one so to insult you and common decency as long as you can defend yourself. I am aware that Eton customs do not attach such disgrace to flogging as elsewhere, and it is one of the greatest objections to this practice that it actually deprives itself of its effect by its frequent repetition. Up to a certain age, flogging may be tolerated; but when the child approaches the period of manhood, such a mode of punishment is revolting to every mind which is capable of being actuated by manly and correct feelings. I wish you to shew this letter to your tutor, in order that he may be made acquainted with my views on this point, and, if he should think proper, communicate them to Dr Goodford.' Accordingly, about three months ago, the young gentleman having been found 'smelling of smoke,' and not choosing to tell an untruth, he did not deny that he had been smoking, and for this he was again sentenced to receive the rod, but in obedience to his father's instructions, he left Eton. This is modern birch—young men of eighteen, nineteen, and even twenty years of age, flogged *supra dorsum nudum* by the head-master of the school, who, from his position, must be a man of great learning and eminence, moving, of course, in the best society, and yet reduced by this tyrant custom to the level of a drummer in the army. We leave it to Mr Thackeray to class this modern absurdity along with that other one which he so well describes in his 'Four Georges'—the lace-bedizened courtier walking backward, like a crab, before a certain great lady at the opening of the Crystal Palace.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE PHANTOM HORSE.

I HAVE encountered dangers—not a few—but they were the ordinary perils of flood and field, and I understood them. I have had one limb broken, and its fellow bored with an ounce of lead. I have swum from a sinking ship, and have fallen upon the battle-field. I have looked at the muzzles of a hundred muskets aimed at my person, at less than thirty yards' distance, and felt the certainty of death; though the volley was fired, and I still live. Well, you will no doubt acknowledge these to be perils. Do not mistake me; I am not boasting of having encountered them; I met them with more or less courage—some of them with fear; but if the fears inspired by all were combined into one emotion of terror, it would not equal in intensity that which I experienced at the moment I pulled up my horse upon the prairie.

I have never been given to superstition; perhaps my religion is not strong enough for that; but at that moment I could not help yielding to a full belief in the supernatural. There was no *natural* cause—I could think of none—that would account for the mysterious disappearance of the horse. I had often sneered at the credulous sailor and his phantom ship; had I lived to look upon a phenomenon equally strange yet true—a phantom horse?

The hunters and trappers had indeed invested the white steed with this character; their stories recurred to my memory at the moment. I had used to smile at the simple credulity of the narrators. I was now prepared to believe them. They were true!

Or was I dreaming? Was it not all a dream? The search for the white steed—the surround—the chase—the long, long gallop?

For some moments I actually fancied that such *might* be the case; but soon my consciousness became clear again: I was in the saddle, and my panting, smoking steed was under me. That was real and positive. I remembered all the incidents of the chase. They, too, were real of a certainty; the white steed had been there: he was gone. The trappers spoke the truth. The horse was a phantom!

Oppressed with this thought, which had almost become a conviction, I sat in my saddle, bent and silent, my eyes turned upon the earth, but their gaze fixed on vacuity. The lazo had dropped from my fingers, and the bridle reins trailed untouched over the withers of my horse.

* * * *

My belief in the supernatural was of short duration; how long I know not, for during its continuance I remained in a state of bewilderment. My senses at length returned. My eyes had fallen upon a fresh hoof-print on the turf, directly in front of me. I knew it was that made by the white steed, and this awoke me to a process of reasoning. Had the horse been a phantom, he would not have made a track? I had never heard of the track of a ghost; though a *horse-ghost* might be different from the common kind!

My reflections on this head ended in the determination to follow the trail as far as it led; of course to the point where the steed must have mounted into the air, or evaporated—the scene of his apotheosis.

With this resolve, I gathered my reins, and rode forward upon the trail, keeping my eyes fixed upon the hoof-prints. The line was direct, and I had ridden nearly two hundred yards, when my horse came to a sudden stop. I looked out forward to discover the cause of his halting; with that glance, vanished my new-born superstitions.

At the distance of some thirty paces, a dark line was seen upon the prairie, running transversely to the course I was following. It appeared to be a narrow crack in the plain; but on spurring nearer, it proved to be a fissure of considerable width—one of those formations known throughout Spanish America as *barrancas*. The earth yawned, as though rent by an earthquake; but water had evidently something to do with its formation. It was of nearly equal width at top and bottom, and its bed was covered with a débris of rocks rounded by attrition. Its sides were perfectly vertical, and the stratification, even to the surface-turf, exactly corresponded—thus rendering it invisible at the distance of but a few paces from its brink. It appeared to shallow to the right, and no doubt ended not far off in that direction. Towards the left, on the contrary, I could see that it became deeper and wider. At the point where I had reached it, its bottom was nearly twenty feet from the surface of the prairie.

Of course, the disappearance of the white steed was no longer a mystery. He had made a fearful leap—nearly twenty feet sheer! There was the torn turf on the brink of the chasm, and the displacement of the loose stones, where he had bounded into its bed. He had gone to the left—down the barranca. The abrasion of his hoofs was visible upon the rocks.

I looked down the defile: he was not to be seen. The barranca turned off at an angle at no great distance. He had already passed round the angle, and was out of sight. It was clear that he had escaped; that to follow would be of no use; and with this reflection I abandoned all thoughts of carrying the chase further.

After giving way to a pang or two of disappointment, I began to think of the position in which I had placed myself. It is true I was now relieved from the feeling of awe that, but a moment before, had oppressed me; but my situation was far from being a pleasant one. I was at least thirty miles from the rancheria, and I could not tell in what direction it lay. The sun was setting, and therefore I had the points of the compass; but I had not the slightest idea whether we had ridden eastward or westward after leaving the settlements. I might ride back on my own trail; *perhaps* I might: it was a doubtful point. Neither through the timber, nor on the open prairie, had the chase gone in a direct line. Moreover, I noticed in many places, as we glided swiftly along, that the turf was cut up by numerous hoof-tracks: droves of mustangs had passed over the ground. It would be no easy matter for me to retrace the windings of that long gallop.

One thing was evident: it would be useless for me to make the attempt before morning. There was not half an hour of sun left, and at night the trail could not be followed. I had no alternative but to remain where I was until another day broke.

But how remain? I was hungry; still worse, I was choking with thirst. Not a drop of water was near; I had seen none for twenty miles. The long, hot ride had made me thirst to an unusual degree, and my poor horse was in a similar condition. The knowledge that no water was near, added, as it always does, to the agony, and rendered the physical want more difficult to be endured.

I scanned the bottom of the barranca, and tracked it with my eye as far as I could see: it was waterless as the plain itself. The rocks rested upon dry sand and gravel; not a drop of the wished-for element appeared within its bed, although it was evident that at some time a torrent must have swept along its channel.

After some reflection, it occurred to me that by following the barranca *downward*, I might find water; at least, this was the most likely direction in which to search for it. I rode forward, therefore, directing my horse along the edge of the chasm. The fissure deepened as I advanced, until, at the distance of a mile from where I first struck it, the gulf yawned full fifty feet into the plain, the sides still preserving their vertical steepness!

The sun had now gone down; the twilight promised to be a short one. I dared not traverse that plain in the darkness; I might ride over the precipitous edge of the barranca. Besides, it was not the only one: I saw there were others—smaller ones—the beds of tributary streams in times of rain. These branched off diagonally or at right angles, and were more or less deep and steep.

Night was fast closing over the prairie; I dared not ride further amid these perilous abysms. I must soon come to a halt, without finding water. I should have to spend the long hours without relief. The thought of such a night was fearful.

I was still riding slowly onward, mechanically conducting my horse, when a bright object fell under my eyes, causing me to start in my saddle with an exclamation of joy. It was the gleam of water. I saw it in a westerly direction, the direction in which I was going. It was a small lake, or—in the phraseology of the country—a pond. It was not in the bottom of the ravine, where I had hitherto been looking for water, but up on the high prairie. There was no timber around it, no sedge; its shores were without vegetation of any kind, and its surface appeared to correspond with the level of the plain itself.

I rode forward with joyful anticipations, yet not without some anxiety. Was it a *mirage?* It might be—often had I been deceived by such appearances. But no: it had not the filmy, gauze-like halo that hangs over the mirage. Its outlines were sharply defined by the prairie turf, and the last lingering rays of the sun glistened upon its surface. It was water!

Fully assured of this, I rode forward at a more rapid rate.

I had got within about two hundred paces of the spot, keeping my eyes fixed upon the glistening water, when all at once my horse started, and drew back! I looked ahead to discover the cause. The twilight had nearly passed, but in the obscurity I could still distinguish the surface of the prairie. The barranca again frowned before me, running transversely across my path. To my chagrin, I perceived that the chasm had made a sudden turn, and that the pond was on its *opposite side!*

CHAPTER XIX.

A PRAIRIE DREAM.

There was no hope of crossing in the darkness. The barranca was here deeper than at any point above; so deep that I could but indistinctly see the rocky boulders at its bottom. Perhaps with the daylight I might be able to find a crossing-place; but from that doubtful hypothesis I derived little consolation.

It had now grown quite dark, and I had no choice but to pass the night where I was, though I anticipated a night of torture.

I dropped to the ground, and having led my horse a few rods into the prairie, so as to keep him clear of the precipice, I relieved him of his saddle and bridle, and left him to browse to the full length of the lazo. For myself, I had but few preparations to make: there was no supper to be cooked, but eating was a matter of secondary importance on that occasion. I should have preferred a cup of water to a roast turkey.

I had but few implements to dispose of in my temporary camp. My rifle and hunting-knife, with horn and pouch, and the double-headed gourd, which served as water-canteen, and which, alas! had been emptied at an early hour of the day. Fortunately, my Mexican blanket was buckled on the croupe. This I unstrapped, and having enveloped myself in its ample folds, and placed my head in the hollow of my saddle, I composed myself as well as I could, in the hope of falling asleep.

For a long time this luxury was denied me. The torture of thirst will rob one of sleep as effectually as the stinging pain of toothache. I turned and turned again, glaring at the moon; she was visible only at intervals, as black clouds were coursing across the canopy; but when she shone out, her light caused the little lake to glisten like a sheet of silver. Oh! how that bright water mocked me with its wavy ripple! I could comprehend the sufferings of Tantalus. I thought at the time that the gods could not have devised a more exquisite torture for the royal Lydian.

After some time, the pain of thirst was less intensely felt. Perhaps the cold damp air of night had the effect of relieving it; but it is more likely that fatigue and long endurance had rendered the sense less acute. Whatever may have been the cause, I suffered less, and felt myself yielding to sleep. There was no sound to keep me awake: perfect stillness reigned around; even the usual howling bark of the prairie-wolf did not reach my ear. The place seemed too lonely for this almost ubiquitous night-prowler. The only sign of life that told me I was not alone was the occasional stroke of my steed's hoof upon the hard turf, and the 'crop-crop' that told me he was busy with the short buffalo-grass. But these were soothing sounds, as they admonished me that my faithful companion was enjoying himself after his hard gallop, and strengthened my desire for repose.

I slept, but not lightly. No; my sleep was heavy and full of troubled dreams. I have a sort of half belief that the *rôle* we play in these dream-scenes wears the body as much as if we enacted it in reality. I have often awaked from such visions feeble from fatigue. If such be the fact, during that night upon the prairie I went through the toils of the preceding day with considerable additions. First of all, I was in the presence of a lovely woman: she was dark-eyed, dark-haired—a brunette—a beauty. I traced the features of Isolina. I gazed in her eyes; I was happy in her smiles; I fancied I was beloved. Bright objects were around me. The whole scene was rose-colour.

This was a short episode: it was interrupted. I heard shouts and savage yells. I looked out: the house was surrounded by Indians! They were already within the enclosure; and the moment after, crowds of them entered the house. There was much struggling and confusion. I battled with such arms as I could lay hold of; several fell before me; but one—a tall savage, the chief, as I thought—threw his arms around my mistress, and carried her away out of my sight.

I remember not how I got mounted; but I was upon horseback, and galloping over the wide prairie in pursuit of the ravisher. I could see the savage ahead upon a snow-white steed, with Isolina in his arms. I urged my horse with voice and spur, but, as I thought, for long, long hours in vain. The white steed still kept far in the advance; and I could come no nearer him. I thought the savage had changed his form. He was no longer an Indian chief, but the fiend himself: I saw the horns upon his head; his feet were cloven hoofs! I thought he was luring me to the brink of some fell precipice, and I had no longer the power to stay my horse. Ha! The demon and his phantom horse have gone over the cliff! They have carried her along with them! I must follow—I cannot remain behind. I am on the brink. My steed springs over the chasm. I am falling—falling—falling!——

I reach the rocks at length. I am not killed: how strange I am not crushed! But no; I still live. Yet I suffer. Thirst chokes and tortures me: my heart and brain are aching, and my tongue is on fire. The sound of water is in my ears: a torrent rushes by, near me. *If* I could only reach it, I might drink and live: but I cannot move; I am chained to the rocks. I grasp one after another, and endeavour to drag myself along: I partially succeed; but oh, what efforts I make. The labour exhausts my strength. I renew my exertions. I am gaining ground: rock after rock is passed. I have neared the rushing water; I feel its cold spray sprinkling me. I am saved!

* * * *

After such fashion ran my dream. It was the shadow of a reality, somewhat disorganised; but the most pleasant reality was that which awoke me. I found myself in the process of being sprinkled, not by the spray of a torrent, but by a plashing shower from the clouds! Under other circumstances, this might have been less welcome, but now I hailed it with a shout of joy. The thunder was rolling almost continuously; lightning blazed at short intervals; and I could hear the roar of a torrent passing down the barranca.

To assuage thirst was my first thought; and for this purpose, I stretched out my concave palms, and held my mouth wide open, thus drinking from the very fountains of the sky. Though the drops fell thick and heavy, the process was too slow, and a better plan suggested itself. I knew that my *serapé* was water-proof: it was one of the best of Parras fabric, and had cost me an hundred silver dollars. This I spread to its full extent, pressing the central parts into a hollow of the prairie. In five minutes' time, I had forgotten what thirst was, and wondered how such a thing should have caused me so much torture!

Moro drank from the same 'trough,' and betook himself to the grass again. The under side of the blanket was still dry, and the patch of ground which it had sheltered. Along this I stretched myself, drew the serapé over me; and after listening a while to the loud lullaby of the thunder, fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER XX.

LOST UPON THE PRAIRIE.

I slept sweetly and soundly. I had no dreams, or only such as were light, and forgotten with the return of consciousness.

It was late when I awoke. A bright sun was mounting into the blue and cloudless sky. This orb was already many degrees above the horizon.

Hunger was the father of my first thought. I had eaten nothing since an early hour of the preceding day, and then only the light *desayuna* of sweet-cake and chocolate. To one not accustomed to long fasting, a single day without food will give some idea of the pain of hunger; that pain will increase upon a second day, and by the third will have reached its maximum. Upon the fourth and fifth, the body grows weaker, and the brain becomes deranged; the nerve, however, is less acute, and though the suffering is still intense, hunger is never harder to endure than upon the second or third days. Of course, these remarks apply only to those not habituated to long fasts. I have known men who could endure hunger for six days, and feel less pain than others under a fast of twenty-four hours. Indians or prairie-hunters were those men, and fortunately for them that they are endowed with such powers of endurance, often driven as they are into circumstances of the most dire necessity. Truly, 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb!'

As I have said, my first thought was of something to eat. I rose to my feet, and with my eye swept the prairie in every direction: no object, living or dead, greeted my sight; beast or bird there was none; my horse alone met my glance, quietly browsing on his trail-rope. I could not help envying him, as I scanned his well-filled sides. I thought of the bounty of the Creator in thus providing for his less intelligent creatures—giving them the power to live where man would starve. Who does not in this recognise the hand of a Providence?

I walked forward to the edge of the barranca, and looked over. It was a grim abyss, over a hundred feet in depth, and about the same in width. Its sides were less precipitous at this point. The escarpment rocks had fallen in, and formed a sort of shelving bank, by which a man on foot might have descended into its bed, and climbed out on the opposite side; but it was not passable for a horse. Its cliffs were furrowed and uneven; rocks jutted out and hung over; and in the seams grew cactus plants, bramble, and small trees of dwarf cedar (*Juniperus prostrata*).

I looked into its channel. I had heard the torrent rolling down in the night. I saw traces of the water among the rocks. A large body must have passed, and yet not a cupful could now have been lifted from its bed! What remained was fast filtering into the sand, or rising back to the heavens upon the heated atmosphere.

I had brought with me my rifle, in hopes of espying some living creature; but, after walking for a considerable distance along the edge, I abandoned the search. No trace of bird or quadruped could be found, and I turned and went back to the place where I had slept.

To draw the picket-pin of my horse and saddle him, was the work of a few minutes; this done, I began to bethink me of *where I was going*. Back to the rancheria, of course! That was the natural reply to such a question; but there was another far less easily answered: How was I to find the way? My design of the previous night—to follow back my own trail—was no longer practicable. *The rain had effaced the tracks!* I remembered that I had passed over wide stretches of light dusty soil, where the hoof scarcely impressed itself. I remembered that the rain had been of that character known as 'planet showers,' with large heavy drops, that, in such places, must have blotted out every trace of the trail. To follow the 'back-track' was no longer possible. I had not before thought of this difficulty; and now, that it presented itself to my mind, it was accompanied by a new feeling of dread. I felt that *I was lost!*

As you sit in your easy-chair, you may fancy that this is a mere bagatelle—a little bewilderment that one may easily escape from who has a good horse between his thighs. It is only to strike boldly out, and by riding on *in a straight line*, you must in time arrive *somewhere*. No doubt, that is your idea; but permit me to inform you that this depends very much upon circumstances. It would indeed be trusting to blind chance. You might arrive 'somewhere,' and that somewhere might be the very point from which you had started! Do you fancy you can ride ten miles in a direct line over a prairie, without a single object to guide you? Be undeceived, then; you cannot! The best mounted men have perished under such circumstances. It may take days to escape out of a fifty-mile prairie, and days bring death. Hunger and thirst soon gain strength and agony—the sooner that you know you have not the wherewith to satisfy the one, nor quench the other. Besides, there is in your very loneliness a feeling of bewilderment, painful to an extreme degree, and from which only the oldest prairie-men are free. Your senses lose half their power, your energy is diminished, and your resolves become weak and vacillating. You feel doubtful at each step as to whether you be following the right path, and are ready at every moment to turn into another. Believe me, it is a fearful thing to be alone and lost upon the prairies!

I felt this keenly enough. I had been on the great plains before, but it was the first time I had the misfortune to wander astray on them, and I was the more terrified that I already hungered to no common degree. There was something singular, too, in the circumstances that had brought me into my present situation. The disappearance of the white steed, although accounted for by perfectly natural causes, had left upon my mind a strange impression. That he should have lured me so far, and then eluded me in such a way! I could not help fancying design in it; and fancying so, I could attribute such design only to a higher intelligence—in fact, to some supernatural cause! I was again on the edge of superstition. My mind began to give way and yield itself to hideous fancies.

I struggled against such thoughts, and succeeded in rousing myself to reflect upon some active measures for my safety. I saw that it was of no use to remain where I was. I knew that I could make a straight path for a couple of hours at least—the sun was in the sky, and that would guide me—until near the meridian hours. Then I should have to halt, and wait a while; for in that southern latitude, and just at that time of the year, the sun at noon is so near the zenith that a practised astronomer could not tell north from south. I reflected that before noon I might reach the timber, though that would not insure my safety. Even the naked plain is not more bewildering than the openings of the mezquite groves and the chapparal that border it. Among these you may travel for days without getting twenty miles from your starting-point, and they are often as destitute of the means of life as the desert itself!

Such were my reflections as I had saddled and bridled my horse, and stood scanning the plain in order to make up my mind as to the direction I should take.

CHAPTER XXI.

A PRAIRIE REPAST.

In gazing out, my eye was attracted by some objects. They were animals, but of what species I could not tell. There are times upon the prairies when form and size present the most illusory aspects: a wolf seems as large as a horse; and a raven, sitting upon a swell of the plain, has been mistaken for a buffalo. A peculiar state of the atmosphere is the magnifying cause, and it is only the experienced eye of the trapper that can reduce the magnified proportions and distorted form to their proper size and shape.

The objects I had noticed were full three miles off; they were in the direction of the lake, and of course on the other side of the barranca. There were several forms—five I counted—moving phantom-like against the rim of the horizon. Something drew my attention from them for a short while—a period of perhaps three or four minutes' duration. When I looked out again, they were no longer to be seen; but by the edge of the pond, at less than five hundred yards' distance, five beautiful creatures were standing, which I knew to be antelopes. They were so close to the pond, that their graceful forms were shadowed in the water, and their erect attitudes told that they had just halted after a run. Their number corresponded with the objects I had seen but the moment before far out upon the prairie. I was convinced they were the same. The distance was nothing: these creatures travel with the speed of a swallow.

The sight of the prong-horns stimulated my hunger. My first thought was how to get near them. Curiosity had brought them to the pond; they had espied my horse and myself afar off, and had galloped up to reconnoitre us. But they still appeared shy and timid, and were evidently not inclined to approach nearer.

The barranca lay between them and me, but I saw that if I could entice them to its brink, they would be within range of my rifle.

Once more staking down my horse, I tried every plan I could think of. I laid myself along the grass upon my back, and kicked my heels in the air, but to no purpose: the game would not move from the water's edge.

Remembering that my serapé was of very brilliant colours, I bethought me of another plan which, when adroitly practised, rarely fails of success. Taking the blanket, I lashed one edge to the ramrod of my rifle, having first passed the latter through the upper swivel of the piece. With the thumb of my left hand I was thus enabled to hold the rammer steady and transverse to the barrel. I now dropped upon my knees, holding the gun shoulder-high, and the gay-coloured serapé spread out almost to its full extent, hung to the ground, and formed a complete cover for my person. Before making these arrangements, I had crept to the very edge of the barranca, in order to be as near as possible should the antelopes approach upon the opposite side. Of course every manœuvre was executed with all the silence and caution I could observe. I was in no reckless humour to frighten off the game. Hunger was my monitor. I knew that not my breakfast alone, but my life, might be depending on the successful issue of the experiment.

It was not long before I had the gratification of perceiving that my decoy was likely to prove attractive. The prong-horned antelope, like most animals of its kind, has one strongly developed propensity—that of *curiosity*. Although to a known enemy it is the most timid of creatures, yet in the presence of an object that is new to it, it appears to throw aside its timidity, or rather its curiosity overcomes its sense of fear; and, impelled by the former, it will approach very near to any strange form, and regard it with an air of bewilderment. The prairie-wolf—a creature that surpasses even the fox in cunning—well knows this weakness of the antelope, and often takes advantage of it. The wolf is less fleet than the antelope, and his pursuit of it in a direct manner would be vain; but with the astute creature, stratagem makes up for the absence of speed. Should a 'band' of antelopes chance to be passing, the prairie-wolf lays himself flat upon the grass, clews his body into a round ball, and thus rolls himself over the ground, or goes through a series of contortions, all the while approaching nearer to his victims, until he has them within springing distance!

Usually he is assisted in these manœuvres by several companions, for the prairie-wolf is social, and hunts in packs.

The square of bright colours soon produced its effect. The five prong-horns came trotting around the edge of the lake, halted, gazed upon it a moment, and then dashed off again to a greater distance. Soon, however, they turned and came running back, this time apparently with greater confidence, and a stronger feeling of curiosity. I could hear them uttering their quick 'snorts' as they tossed up their tiny heads and snuffed the air. Fortunately, the wind was in my favour, blowing directly from the game, and towards me; otherwise, they would have 'winded' me, and discovered the cheat, for they both know and fear the scent of the human hunter.

The band consisted of a young buck and four females—his wives; the nucleus, no doubt, of a much larger establishment in prospect—for the antelope is polygamous, and some of the older males have an extensive following. I knew the buck by his greater size and forking horns, which the does want. He appeared to direct the actions of the others, as they all stood in a line behind him, following and imitating his motions.

At the second approach, they came within a hundred yards of me. My rifle was equal to this range, and I prepared to fire. The leader was nearest me, and him I selected as the victim. Taking sight, I pulled trigger. As soon as the smoke cleared off, I had the satisfaction of seeing the buck down upon the prairie, in the act of giving his last kick. To my surprise, none of the others had been frightened off by the report, but stood gazing at their fallen leader, apparently bewildered.

I bethought me of reloading; but I had incautiously risen to my feet, and so revealed my form to the eyes of the antelopes. This produced an effect which neither the crack of the rifle nor the fall of their comrade had done; and the now terrified animals wheeled about and sped away like the wind. In less than two minutes, they were beyond the reach of vision.

The next question that arose was how I was to get across the barranca. The tempting morsel lay upon the other side, and I therefore set about examining the chasm in order to find a practicable crossing. This I fortunately discovered. On both sides, the cliff was somewhat broken down, and might be scaled, though not without considerable difficulty.

After once more looking to the security of my horse's trail-rope, I placed my rifle where I had slept, and set out to cross the barranca, taking only my knife. I could have no use for the gun, and it would hinder me in scaling the cliffs. I got to the bottom of the ravine, and commenced ascending on the opposite side where it was steeper; but I was assisted by the branches of the trailing cedar that grew among the rocks. I noticed, and with some surprise, that the path must have been used before, either by men or animals.

The soil that lay upon the ledges was 'paddled' as by feet, and the rock in some places scratched and discoloured. These indications only caused me a momentary reflection. I was too hungry to dwell upon any thought but that of eating.

At length I reached the scarp of the cliff, and climbing out upon the prairie, soon stood over the carcass of the prong-horn. My knife was out, and next moment I was busy playing the part of butcher.

You will no doubt fancy that the next thing I did was to go in search of something to make a fire for the purpose of cooking. I did nothing of the sort; the next thing I did was to eat my breakfast. *I ate it raw;* and had you been in my situation, delicate as you are, you would have done the same.

It is true that, after I had satisfied the first cravings of appetite with the tongue of the antelope and a few morsels of steak, I became more fastidious, and thought a little roasting might improve the venison. For this purpose, I was about to return to the barranca, in order to gather some sticks of the cedar-wood, when my eyes fell upon an object that drove all thoughts of cookery out of my head, and sent a thrill of terror to my heart. The object in question was a large animal, which I at once recognised as the *grizzly bear,* the most dreaded of all creatures that inhabit the prairie.

LETTERS OF JAMES BOSWELL.*

The ripened fame and acceptance of that extraordinary book, Boswell's *Life of Johnson,* gives an interest to the personality of the author, which no one seems to have felt when he was alive. A series of characteristic letters by him, illustrated by biographic particulars, is therefore pretty sure of attracting public attention. At first, we suspected it to be a volume of forgeries; but, on inspection, we find the genuineness of the letters to be beyond doubt. They were addressed, throughout the course of thirty-seven years, to a bosom-friend of the writer, a certain Rev. Mr Temple, living in an obscure Cornish rectory. A most singular revelation of personal character they form—the outpouring of the feelings of a man not without talents, acquirements, and good aspirations, but altogether deficient in prudence, dignity, and suitableness for the world's ordinary affairs—one who was not much worse in essential respects than most of his neighbours, but who put himself at the feet of them all by his silly forwardness, love of notoriety, and the constant self-composure of a babbling tongue. For the first half of the book, we altogether doubted the use of its publication, beyond the gratification of those curious in literary history; while of the justifiableness of making such an exposé of the personal vices, weaknesses, and domestic circumstances of one who died only sixty years since, and who has left numerous descendants, there seemed to us to be—something more than doubts. But on reaching the end, our conception of the book underwent a change. We then found the life of the man shewing so impressively the futility of all hopes of happiness based on the mere gratification of vanity and sensual appetites, we found the ultra-gaiety of the clever coxcombical youth ending in such expressions of pain and sorrow, the natural fruits of a long course of dissipation, that we believed the book might prove to have been well worth publishing.

Boswell occupied a position in society of which Englishmen, knowing him only by his books, have in general an inadequate conception. He was, by birth and connections, emphatically a *gentleman.* The eldest son and heir of a landed man occupying the dignified position of a judge, and himself a member of the Scotch bar, he had the fairest prospects in life—might have looked to a great marriage, to entering parliament, to high state employment. We find that, even in his own time, the family estates were L.1600 a year. In the ensuing generation, they were probably of considerably more than twice that value, and it seemed but in the fair course of things that a British baronetcy was then conferred on the family. All these advantages Boswell in a great measure forfeited by the literary and social tastes which led him to be the companion of London wits, and enabled him to pen the immortal book which bears his name. Perhaps it were impossible for any Englishman to imagine the *eccentricity* of Boswell as viewed in reference to the Ayrshire gentry and Edinburgh *noblesse de robe* amongst whom he sprung into existence, or those Calvinistic doctrines and sober maxims of life which ought in the course of nature to have descended to him.

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* Bentley, London, 1857. 8vo, pp. 403.

The letters to Mr Temple first exhibit Boswell in youth, enthusiastic in study, but doubtful how to direct himself in life. He is constantly engaged in some affair of the heart, which comes to nothing. Already, he haunts the society of such literary men as then dwelt in Edinburgh. Before he was full one-and-twenty, he had dipped into the gaieties of London, and found their congeniality. 'A young fellow,' he says, 'whose happiness was always centered in London, who had at last got there, and had begun to taste its delights, who had got his mind filled with the most gay ideas—getting into the Guards, being about court, enjoying the happiness of the *beau-monde* and the company of men of genius, in short, everything that he could wish—consider this poor fellow hauled away to the town of Edinburgh, obliged to conform to every Scotch custom or be laughed at—"Will you hae some jeel? oh fie! oh fie!"—his flighty imagination quite cramped, and he obliged to study Corpus Juris Civilis, and live in his father's strict family; is there any wonder, sir, that the unlucky dog should be somewhat fretful? Yoke a Newmarket courser to a dung-cart, and I'll lay my life on't he'll either caper and kick most confoundedly, or be as stupid and restive as an old, battered post-horse.'

His father early saw how much he was disposed to break bounds, and tried to control him with good counsel. 'Honest man!' says Boswell, 'he is now very happy: it is amazing to think how much he has had at heart my pursuing the road of civil life; he is anxious for fear I should fall off from my prudent system, and return to my dissipated, unsettled way of thinking; and, in order to make him easy, he insists on having my solemn promise that I will persist in the scheme on which he is so earnestly bent: he knows my fidelity, and he concludes that my promise will fix me. Indeed, he is much in the right; the only question is, how much I am to promise. I think I may promise thus much: that I shall from this time study propriety of conduct, and to be a man of knowledge and prudence, as far as I can; that I shall make as much improvement as possible while I am abroad, and when I return, shall put on the gown as a member of the Faculty of Advocates, and be upon the footing of a gentleman of business, with a view to my getting into parliament. My father talks of my setting out soon, but says he will soon write to me fixing my allowance; I imagine, therefore, that I shall go the week after next. I feel no small reluctance at leaving this great metropolis, which I heartily agree with you is the best place in the world to live in. My dear friend, I find that London must be the place where I shall pass a great part of my life, if I wish to pass it with satisfaction. I hope we shall spend many happy years there, when we are both settled as to views of life and habits of living; in the meantime, let me endeavour to acquire steadiness and constant propriety of conduct, without which we never can enjoy what I fondly hope for.'

He went to study law in Utrecht, and in 1766, when twenty-six years old, indued the gown of a Scotch advocate. For a time, he seems to have got some business, chiefly through the indirect effect of his father being on the bench. But Edinburgh was an alien scene, and the whim of the moment was always the guide of Boswell. With inconsistency in which he is, we fear, far from singular, he explicitly tells his clerical friend of a disgraceful connection he has formed, and in the same letter speaks with complacency of going to chapel, and 'looking up to the Lord of the Universe with a grateful remembrance of the grand and mysterious propitiation which Christianity has announced.' In the midst of the same circumstances, but writing from Auchinleck, his father's country-seat, he talks of a respectable marriage. 'What say you to my marrying? I intend, next autumn, to visit Miss Bosville, in Yorkshire; but I fear, my lot being cast in Scotland, that beauty would not be content. She is, however, grave; I shall see. There is a young lady in the neighbourhood here who has an estate of her own—between two and three hundred a year—just eighteen, a genteel person, an agreeable face, of a good family, sensible, good-tempered, cheerful, pious. You know my grand object is the ancient family of Auchinleck—a venerable and noble principle. How would it do to conclude an alliance with the neighbouring princess, and add her lands to our dominions? I should at once have a very pretty little estate, a good house, and a sweet place. My father is very fond of her; it would make him perfectly happy: he gives me hints in this way:—"I wish you had her—no bad scheme this; I think, a very good one." But I will not be in a hurry; there is plenty of time. I will take to myself the advice I wrote to you from Naples, and go to London a while before I marry. I am not yet quite well, but am in as good a way as can be expected. My fair neighbour was a ward of my father's; she sits in our seat at church in Edinburgh; she would take possession here most naturally. This is a superb place; we have the noblest natural beauties, and my father has made most extensive improvements. We look ten miles out upon our own dominions; we have an excellent new house. I am now writing in a library forty feet long. Come to us, my dearest friend; we will live like the most privileged spirits of antiquity.'

He could also get drunk in drinking Miss Blair's health, for that was the name of his princess. But that, to be sure, was the fashion of the age. There are many letters containing little besides the details of this love affair. The lady seems to have penetrated the volatile superficial character of her lover. She never could be brought to the point. Tormented with her coolness, he in one letter congratulates himself on escaping from a coquette, and in the next, has resumed all his former admiration. He thus describes one of their interviews: 'On Monday forenoon I waited on Miss B. I found her alone, and she did not seem distant; I told her that I was most sincerely in love with her, and that I only dreaded those faults which I had acknowledged to her. I asked her seriously if she now believed me in earnest. She said she did. I then asked her to be candid and fair, as I had been with her, and to tell me if she had any particular liking for me. What think you, Temple, was her answer? "No, I really have no particular liking for you; I like many people as well as you." Temple, you must have it in the genuine dialogue.

'*Boswell.* Do you, indeed? Well, I cannot help it; I am obliged to you for telling me so in time. I am sorry for it.

'*Princess.* I like Jeany Maxwell (Duchess of Gordon) better than you.

'*B.* Very well; but do you like no man better than me?

'*P.* No.

'*B.* Is it possible that you may like me better than other men?

'*P.* I don't know what is possible.

'(By this time I had risen and placed myself by her, and was in real agitation.)

'*B.* I'll tell you what, my dear Miss Blair, I love you so much that I am very unhappy if you cannot love me. I must, if possible, endeavour to forget you. What would you have me do?

'*P.* I really don't know what you should do.

'*B.* It is certainly possible that you may love me; and if you shall ever do so, I shall be the happiest man in the world. Will you make a fair bargain with me? If you should happen to love me, will you own it?

'*P.* Yes.

'*B.* And if you should happen to love another, will you tell me immediately, and help me to make myself easy?

'*P.* Yes, I will.

'*B.* Well, you are very good (often squeezing and kissing her fine hand, while she looked at me with those beautiful black eyes).

'*P.* I may tell you, as a cousin, what I would not tell to another man.

'*B.* You may indeed. You are very fond of Auchinleck—that is one good circumstance.

'*P.* I confess I am. I wish I liked you as well as I do Auchinleck.

'*B.* I have told you how fond I am of you; but, unless you like me sincerely, I have too much spirit to ask you to live with me, as I know that you do not like me. If I could have you this moment for my wife, I would not.

'*P.* I should not like to put myself in your offer though.

'*B.* Remember, you are both my cousin and my mistress, you must make me suffer as little as possible, as it may happen that I may engage your affections. I should think myself a most dishonourable man if I were not now in earnest, and, remember, I depend upon your sincerity; and whatever happens, you and I shall never have another quarrel.

'*P.* Never.

'*B.* And I may come and see you as much as I please?

'*P.* Yes.

'My worthy friend, what sort of a scene was this? It was most curious. She said she would submit to her husband in most things. She said that to see one loving her would go far to make her love that person; but she would not talk anyhow positively, for she never had felt the uneasy anxiety of love. We were an hour and a half together, and seemed pleased all the time. I think she behaved with spirit and propriety. I admire her more than ever.'

He at length considered himself as off with Miss Blair, and at liberty to pay his vows to a pretty young cousin, a Miss Montgomerie, the daughter of an Irish counsellor, who was visiting near him in Ayrshire. What a curious revelation of a human heart! In August, 'I was allowed to walk a great deal with Miss ——; I repeated my fervent passion to her again and again; she was pleased, and I could swear that her little heart beat. She promised not to forget me, or marry a lord before March.' This was 'all youthful, warm, natural—in short, genuine love.' Soon after, he learned that Miss Blair was still within reach. He revisited her, and relapsed into the former fever. 'I walked whole hours with the Princess; I kneeled; I became truly amorous; but she told me that she had a very great regard for me, but did not like me so as to marry me.' 'Then came a kind letter from my amiable Aunt Boyd in Ireland, and all the charms of sweet Mary Anne revived. Since that time, I have been quite constant to her, and as indifferent towards Kate as if I never had thought of her.' The problem came to a solution next year by his marrying Miss Montgomerie.

The cares and responsibilities of matrimony never had any effect in steadying Boswell's giddy course. At five-and-forty, after comparatively failing at the Scotch, he entered at the English bar. The change of position only expanded his indulgences, not his fortunes. We find him confessing that he had all his life been straitened for money. Can we wonder at it in one who made the following of his whims and the indulgence of his tastes and appetites the rule of his life? Poor Boswell! It is melancholy to find that, while preparing his wonderful book, the disappointment of his professional failure, the pinch of genteel poverty, and the rough raillery of the Northern Circuit, all pressed sore upon his spirit. Reared amongst an intemperate set, he gradually became more and more addicted to liquor—was constantly resolving to abstain—but always relapsing. For a long time, he had hopes of getting a government place; looking to parliamentary influence in Ayrshire as a purchase against the minister; but all ended in disappointment. By some influence with the Earl of Lonsdale, he did obtain the situation of Recorder of Carlisle; but it does not seem to have brought an income, and the connection came to a painful termination, the noble lord and his dependent having a violent quarrel, as thus recorded: 'Upon his seeing me by no means in good-humour, he challenged it roughly, and said: "I suppose you thought I was to bring you into parliament; I never had any such intention." In short, he expressed himself in the most degrading manner, in presence of a low man from Carlisle, and one of his menial servants! The miserable state of low spirits I had, as you too well know, laboured under for some time before, made me almost sink under such unexpected insulting behaviour. He insisted rigorously on my having solicited the office of Recorder of Carlisle; and that I could not, without using him ill, resign it, until the duties which were now required of it were fulfilled, and without a sufficient time being given for the election of a successor. Thus was I dragged away, as wretched as a convict; and in my fretfulness, I used such expressions as irritated him almost to fury, so that he used such expressions towards me, that I should have, according to the irrational laws of honour sanctioned by the world, been under the necessity of risking my life, had not an explanation taken place. This happened during the first stage. The rest of the journey was barely tolerable: we got to Lancaster on Saturday night, and there I left him to the turmoil of a desperate attempt in electioneering. I proceeded to Carlisle last night, and to-day have been signing orders as to poor's-rates. I am alone at an inn, in wretched spirits, and ashamed and sunk on account of the disappointment of hopes, which led me to endure such grievances. I deserve all that I suffer.'

What a lesson on the sorrows of slothful dependence, as contrasted with honest independent hard work and self-denial!

The letters of the last five years tell us of little but illness and depression of spirits—a sad contrast to the frivolous gaiety of those written in youth. Boswell sank, to all appearance under the consequences of dissipation, at the too early age of fifty-five (May 1795).

NATURAL HISTORY OF MY POND.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

Not far from my residence is a little sunny pool—not one of those dirty, green, stagnant ponds which breathe pestilence, but a clear bright pool, with a pure stream of water flowing through it, white in the spring-time with flowers of the water-crowfoot, and in summer, gay with blossoms of the flowering-rush and the purple loosestrife, whilst a few water-lilies float like a group of royal bridemaids on its surface. My Pond does not extend over quite half an acre of ground; on one side it is bounded by a few stunted willow-trees, which bend their boughs gracefully toward it; while on the other, many of the common water-plants grow at the margin, and give occasional shelter to a vagrant water-hen. None of these have, however, to my knowledge, become permanent residents in my pool. Though my domain is not extensive, yet it is to me a perfect vivarium; and, in gratitude for the pleasure it has often given to me, I have determined to write the story of its inhabitants; not the occasional rarities, but the well-known familiar faces who may always be met with in the right times and seasons. It must be only a very slight sketch, though a folio volume might be written on them; so this little memoir must be taken by the reader rather as an introduction, a card allowing him to call and make the acquaintance of my friends at his leisure.

Firstly, there are giants in the pool—there are vertebrate animals, quadrupeds, reptiles, fish. Of the fish there is not, indeed, much to say; it is difficult to see much of them, and the only approach to familiarity between us is when a carp rises to take a crumb of bread thrown upon the water for him. There are, besides, the minnow and the common stickleback; and a legendary story exists of a pike having been seen there, but this is not given upon good authority, and the splash witnessed by my informant was more probably caused by a water-rat diving from the bank. Of the fish, the one which to me possesses most interest is the stickleback, the male becomes such a beau in spring-time; and, besides this, they have more wit than fish in general, for the female does not leave her eggs to the chance mercy of the winds and waves, but builds a nice compact little nest amongst the water-plants; and over this the male keeps watch, as a good and true husband should, and no water-beetle or dragon-fly larva dare venture within his reach: he is ever ready, waiting, lance in hand, to do battle with all comers.

Great favourites of mine are the newts, both the larger and smaller species. Gorgeous fellows are the males in their wooing-dress, with their orange breasts and crested backs; and very amusing are they to watch. One of these Adonises of My Pond may be often seen escorting some fair dame, and shewing his agility by every means in his power, doing his utmost to make himself agreeable; and when the nuptial-time is over, the interest does not cease, for the offspring also are much to be admired: they are not, like the vulgar tadpoles, pertaining to the toads and frogs, but evidently an aristocratic race, adorned with large feathery branchiæ, fringing their necks like those goodly collars that were worn by our great-great-great-grandmothers in the glorious days of Good Queen Bess. Frogs and toads are there also; the former jump nimbly enough into the pool at my approach. Poor beings! they seem to have been made for the physiologist as sheep for the butcher; and it is to be feared that mine are not always safe from this their usual fate; yet the supply never fails, and in the spring the pool is ever musical with their love-notes: the first sounds which tell us of the coming of warm weather. However unpoetical such an opinion may be, it is yet true that these tender murmurings of the frogs are the earliest harbingers of spring; they are heard long, long before the swallow, before even the wild-bee and the primrose make their appearance; and the snow-drop is rather the offspring of winter than the promise of its departure.

But there are higher vertebrates dwelling in My Pool than frogs and newts; the splash of the water-rat as it leaps from the bank may be heard frequently; and if you watch, the furrow on the surface will soon point him out, dimly visible, immersed beneath the water, yet swimming along bravely; or he may be seen, when he has gained the opposite bank, making his way stealthily up to his hole. But the name of rat, like the idle gossip of a country-town, sticks to him; and though he does not deserve it, and the rat of the town bears little relationship to the rat of the country, yet it prejudices him in the eyes of all, and, it must be confessed, he is no favourite of mine. There is another little animal which ranks especially high in my opinion; he comes gently down from the bank towards the evening, and begins his aquatic sports, looking, as he swims in and out amongst the water-lily leaves, not unlike a great water-beetle; but the glossy hair glistening with air-bubbles will soon detect him, and his sharp muzzle marks him to be a shrew-mouse. By keeping perfectly quiet, you may watch his gambols for a long time—now swimming on the surface, now diving beneath it, or sporting among the water-weeds. There is nowhere to be found a more engaging animal than this little shrew: he is one of the greatest ornaments of My Pond, or rather, it should be said, they are, for there are generally a pair to be seen playing together. Nor is it, indeed, always play, for the earnest way in which they push their long snouts amongst the water-plants shews that there is a purpose in their movements. No wonder they are favourites of mine, for they give me much amusement in the calm summer evenings. The shrew used to participate in the ill-feeling that appertained to 'witches, warlocks, and all lang-nebbit things,' and the land species was deemed the cause of many an evil by our simple ancestors; but our amphibious friend was probably then unknown.

It is not, however, vertebrate, but articulated or jointed animals which My Pond yields in the greatest plenty. It is easy to obtain several species of the crab-kind, or crustaceans, two or three spiders, very many insects, and several of the less-organised examples of the group. Of the crustaceans, the most conspicuous example is a small shrimp (*Gammarus pulex*), looking like a sandhopper. He need scarcely be described, for every one must know him, as he is probably a denizen of almost every pool in the kingdom. He is active, and chases about the smaller animals in a relentless manner; and he may boast, also, of being my largest crustacean, for the others are much smaller, scarcely exceeding a pin's-head in size. The commonest of these (*Cyclops quadricornis*) is known easily by the two egg-bags which the female carries by the side of her tail. No wonder that this species is abundant, for Jurine calculates that at the end of one year a single female would have become the progenitor of 4,442,189,120 young! And this is probably too low an estimate. The young are produced in a state very unlike the parent, and it is some days before they assume the adult form, the time changing with the warmth of the weather and with the light admitted to them. The specimens found in My Pool vary much both in colour and size; some are black, others olive-green, whilst the most frequent are of a yellowish white. They are very active, and move deftly through the water, but may be easily seen with the naked eye. Under a common magnifying-glass, all their parts can be distinctly noted, and especially the peculiarity which has gained them their name—the fact of their having only one eye. There is another species (*Daphnia pulex*) rather larger than this, which may be often seen in swarms among the water-plants, especially in sunny weather. All of this little being, except the head, is enclosed within the valves of a delicate shell; these valves have no hinge, but are open in front, and simply soldered together along the posterior edge; the animal possesses, however, some power of opening or shutting them at will: this is the water-flea, a merry, harmless little being, having of course no right or title whatever to the name of flea, except for its activity. Donovan gives an amusing, though very unfavourable account of it: he says, 'by numerous filaments which it darts forth, it causes such a motion in the water as to attract unresistingly the insects floating into its mouth. Thus it exists in a life of rapine and destruction, enjoyed at the expense of the lives of thousands; and as the objects of its ravenous disposition are defenceless, so are they the sport of their conqueror. The few moments of intermission its craving appetite grants them are occupied equally in the spoil, first pressing them to death, and then tossing them undevoured into the fluid. But should a more powerful insect oppose him, he immediately contracts his parts, and nothing more than the external covering is open to his antagonist's violence, and he will sooner die ignobly than offer the least opposition!' There is a curious provision with regard to the multiplication of this little being: the female lays two kinds of eggs—the one in summer, which soon produces young; but the other just before the approach of winter. This lies for some time upon the back of the animal like a saddle, and has hence been called the ephippium; it contains two eggs. These are able to resist the cold of winter, which is fatal to the perfect animal. 'This ephippium floats on the surface of the water, and remains with the two eggs enclosed till next spring, when the young are hatched by the returning warmth of the season.' These two kind of eggs shew that the preservation even of the most insignificant of beings is abundantly provided for. There is in the pond a far prettier species (*Cypris vidua*) than either of the two mentioned. Draw a plant of callitriche to land, and there will probably be found a specimen of this little crustacean entangled in it. It has a shell very much like that of a bivalve mollusk, of a white colour, with a slight tinge of green, and on this shell are three black stripes. It not only swims with great activity, but runs actively along the leaves of the water-plants, or along the bottom of the pool. The shell differs from that of the water-flea before described in being open, except in the middle third of the dorsal surface, where there is a true ligamentous hinge and muscles, by which the animal can open or shut the shell at its pleasure. In appearance, it much resembles a very small muscle, but of course can be known at once from any bivalve shell by its movements and by its four legs. There is more than one species of this elegant little shell in My Pond; but the one described is the most frequent, and also the most beautiful. We shall finish the 'first fytte' of our history with it, and commence the next with the spiders.

The only species of spiders which My Pond contains all belong to one genus (*Arachnida*); they seem like overgrown mites of a reddish-brown colour (*Hydrachna globulus*), and about the size of a sweet-pea seed; but they are rapacious enough, and undergo, in the early stages of their life, some strange metamorphoses. Being then parasitic upon the large water-beetles, they are rather amusing to keep and watch, from the variety and agility of their movements. Their respiration is, like that of insects, by air-tubes, which ramify in the body. Of the ordinary pulmonary or lung-breathing spiders, My Pond has no example.

Next to these come the insects, and of these, firstly, the beetles; and here it is not possible to enumerate one-quarter of the examples of this tribe found in My Pond. Size gives the precedence to the Dytisci (*Dytiscus marginalis*)—large oval beetles, nearly two inches in length, of a bronze-black colour, but light-brown on the reversed side. They may be always seen swimming among the water-weeds, urging themselves on by the aid of their powerful hind limbs, which they use as oars. I kept one of these for a long time. During the day, he remained quietly in the water; but at night, he would make excursions round the room, and seemed to have a particular penchant for flying in the faces of those who entered his apartment. He was fed upon wasps, and on these he throve well, until one day a specimen not quite dead was put into the vase in which he lived, and he was stung, and died in consequence. Curious beings are the larvæ of these water-beetles: they have six legs at the front-part of a long fishlike body, and the odd, flat, square head is armed with powerful jaws. They swim rapidly along by aid of the tail, and are, like the perfect insect, very voracious in their habits. Besides these larger water-beetles, there are many of lesser size, some extremely like the Dytisci: these are Colymbetes; and there are several species in the pond. There are many other genera; but space will only allow us to notice the whirligig-beetles (*Gyrinus natator*). These are probably familiar to all lovers of angling; indeed, they have gained a classic fame through the mention made of them by old Izaak Walton. On the surface of the pond they are to be always seen, dressed in shining blue-black coats. They keep up a constant quadrille, making their ball-room out of some quiet little bay in the pool: there is one spot especially, fringed by rushes, and with a large pond-weed shutting it out from the external world, that they seem particularly fond of. It is very pleasant to watch them. They are the idlest beings in My Pool, the veriest triflers in existence, dancing away all their lives; and yet other beings might more easily be spared from my aquarium than these merry whirligigs.

The dragon-flies, and the species allied to them, must be noticed next to the beetles; and though it must be confessed that they do not live in the water during their adult life, yet they haunt the pool so much that it is perfectly just to class them as denizens of it. The flies themselves must be first described. There is one of a sky-blue colour, with only a few rings of black; its body is scarcely thicker than a large pin, and its wings are of the most delicate gauze (*Agrion furcatum*). Surely there is nothing dragon-like in this. The French term them, with far more politeness, *petites demoiselles*. There is another species (*A. minium*) much like this in figure, but with the body of a deep-red colour; and there is a third kind also common here, smaller than these, with a body nearly approaching to black, except a single broad band of blue near the tail (*A. zonatum*); this is a very common, but a very pretty and delicate little dragon-fly. One of the red species has just vindicated its title to the name by seizing on one of the little brassy green flies (*Dolichopus aneus*) so frequent on the herbage by the pool. It has borne him off safely to the leaf of a water-plantain, to devour at leisure. Let us leave him in quiet possession of his meal, and take a walk round by the willow-trees; we shall not fail there to find another species (*Calepteryx virgo*), with a body of glossy purple, and dark purple wings, the lady being, however, green, and with wings of a more sober brown colour. This is one of the most lovely of our native species; not very active, however, flitting rather than flying from leaf to leaf, and rarely taking long flights. There is one larger species (*Libellula depressa*) also, which must be noticed, whose habits are the very reverse of this. It may always be seen at the pool on a sunny day in summer. The body is of a slaty-blue colour, and flattened; and the wings, though transparent, are shaded with dark-brown at the base. This is a perfect tyrant, darting round the pool with the speed of lightning, and having the swiftest flight of any of the dragon-flies. He lords it over the whole pool, only settling just for a moment on some decayed twig or broken bough at the water's edge, and then, probably, because he has made a capture of some unfortunate victim. He makes his prey not only on gnats and lesser flies, but on caddis-flies of large size, or even on a wandering butterfly. Other dragon-flies come as occasional guests; but these are true inhabitants, and may always be met with. The interest is not confined to the perfect fly, for they can easily be caught in their previous stages of life, which gives them more than ever a right to claim the citizenship of My Pond, for this early life is passed beneath its waters. The larva is a busy, active, and rapacious creature, propelling himself forward by sucking water in at the tail, and then forcing it out violently: this answers the double purpose of supplying his system with the oxygen from the air dissolved in the water, and of forcing him onwards. The pupa is chiefly remarkable for the jointed lower-lip which is used to take its prey in the manner of a hand, and which covers the face like a mask. It is like the larva, active and voracious; but before its final change, comes out of the water on one of the broad leaves of the plants near, there casts its slough, spreads its wings to the sunshine, and flies off as one of the glorious beings we have been watching. See! this burst of evening sun has brought out one of the flat-bodied species we were talking of just now: he has settled for one moment, with outspread wings, on the summit of one of the flag-leaves; now he is off again, darting round the pool; his supper does not 'yet run a-foot,' but it is flying somewhere, and has to be earned before he can get it.

We will now turn to the more peaceful ephemera or day-flies. Poor creatures! their perfect life is but a brief one. There are in the pool more than one species, but the commonest is a large fellow (*Ephemera vulgata*), a bashaw of three tails, and with curiously mottled wings. He dances up and down for a few hours in the summer evening, and the next morning you find him with outstretched wings floating on the pool. Has my reader ever been to the Rhine in summer?—he will then know well what an ephemeron is. As soon as evening comes, myriads of a snow-white species of these *wasser-fliegen* haunt you everywhere; incessant swarms pass by you on the steamers, so that you always seem sailing through some long cloud of flies. They come to your lights in swarms, until literally heaps of them lie dead upon your table; they are in your tea, in your milk; your butter is covered by a delicate layer of them; they are everywhere; turn where you will, you are surrounded by these emblems of the frailty of life. Our ephemeron often dances in merry groups over the water; but swarms like these are quite unknown. The larvæ of these flies are very beautiful; the tufts of branchiæ, or appendages for breathing, which are arranged down each side, are most elegant in form, and in constant play. They are best met with in the spring-time. Like the dragon-fly, the pupa comes out of the water to undergo its change; but even when the perfect insect appears, it is for about an hour clothed with another tunic, which has to be cast off before it is quite complete.

Nearly allied to these, we have the group of caddis-flies. Their wings are four, covered with hairs instead of being gauze-like and transparent. We shall not fail to find some species on the stumps of the willow-trees. The commonest of the group is a large brown fellow (*Phryganea grandis*), with long antennæ. We have many species on the pool. The larvæ are always to be found; they construct for themselves cases, made out of fragments of stick and sand, open at both ends. They walk along the bottom of the pond in rather an awkward manner, carrying their houses on their backs, into which they retreat in case of danger. Some of the cases are constructed with great regularity. There are many species inhabiting the pool, but the one mentioned is certainly the commonest.

Look! here is one of the next tribe (*Hydrometra*) which must fall under our notice. He glides over the surface of the water as quickly in proportion as any six-oared gig in a boat-race; his body is pointed before and behind like a London wherry; and his two middle legs urge him on much as a pair of oars would do. There are more than one species in the pond. Their gambols are very amusing, though there is a degree of awkwardness in the movements of their long legs. Sometimes they attempt a dance, as the whirligigs, but they have not the same graceful ease in their movements; sometimes, but rarely, they are provided with wings.

Belonging to the same group, but to a different section, are the water-boatmen (*Notonecta glauca*). These always swim upon their backs: they rest on the surface of the water, or rather with their tails at the surface, basking in the sunshine; but let your hand approach, and a stroke of their powerful oars takes them away speedily amongst the water-plants. They are very amusing beings—in the day-time swimming about the pool, in the night, making aërial excursions into the neighbourhood. Nearly allied to these is the brown water-scorpion (*Nepa cinerea*), so called from its anterior pair of feet bearing a very distant resemblance to the mandibles of the real scorpion, to which, it need scarcely be said, it bears no true relationship.

There are some moths even which must be claimed as citizens. If one of the floating pond-weeds be drawn to the banks, we shall not fail to find on it a number of curious shields cut out of the leaf, oval in shape, and looking somewhat like the case of the caddis-fly. These (*Hydrocampa potamogota*), which thus pass their lives in these little tents, come out in July as the pretty moths commonly known by the name of China-marks, from their wings being marked with a curious and beautiful pattern of a brownish-yellow colour. There is another species to be found upon the water-lilies (*H. nymphæata*); and another, still commoner, which makes a long cylindrical case out of the fronds of the lesser duckweed (*H. lemnata*).

The only remaining insects which can be said to be true natives of the pond, are a few two-winged flies; and of these the gnats are the species which have the most right to the privileges of citizenship, since, like the dragon-flies, their early life is passed in the water. There are abundance of kinds which haunt the margins: these are only guests; but the gnats live there by far the greatest portion of their lives. It is curious to see the female deposit her eggs: she alights carefully and steadily upon the water, and, guiding herself by the hind feet, builds a perfect little canoe of eggs, which floats off upon the surface of the pond; and sometimes a large fleet of these may be seen sailing along together. From these the well-known larva emerges; this breathes by its tail, and therefore is often to be seen head downwards, suspended at the top of the water. The pupæ have not legs like those of the dragon-flies, and therefore the change takes place in the pond, the insect emerging from its shell as it floats upon the surface: this requires great caution, and is a period of great danger to the insect, a passing breeze often consigning many to a watery grave. Myriads, however, still exist, and are, it must be confessed, rather troublesome friends, being frequently too kind in their attentions. With them, the account of my insect acquaintance must be concluded, hoping my reader may be preserved from their attacks, whether as gnats or mosquitoes, until we meet again.

MATRIMONIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

The art of getting married is practised in many different ways in different parts of the world. This statement, admitting of no dispute, need not be illustrated with examples. I will not detail to a well-informed public, whose ear has been bored, figuratively speaking, with numerous particulars of the same kind, the manner in which the Cingalese and the Chinese, and other hes, take wives unto themselves. It is generally known that, among barbarous nations, and occasionally among some that are not barbarous, the marriage-ceremony is but the clenching of a bargain, the arrangement by which certain goods—item one bride, item one marriage-portion, &c.—are assigned and delivered over to the purchaser. It is also to be gathered from the pages of history, that the same ceremony, performed between royal personages, has been more frequently an alliance between nations than individuals, a *gage*, not so much *d'amour* as *d'amitié*; that the daughter of a royal house has been sent as a peace-offering to a dangerous neighbour, and that the fair hostage has received the title of queen with the name of a wife, her position being less fitly represented by the golden circlet on the finger, than by that on the head.

These are subjects on which, as a moralist, I conceive that the less said the better. Nor will it be considered that the art of getting married, as practised in our own country, requires much elucidation. Much learned disquisition and many bad jokes have been brought to bear upon that question. I refrain from venturing on a topic which has been elaborately treated of in various works in three volumes. But the art is now practised elsewhere in a manner so entirely distinct from former experience, that it seems to claim a little attention.

The method in question has lately come into use in America, and is intimately connected with the discovery of photography. There is an illustrated periodical published in New York, called the *Ledger of Romance*, which allots a portion of its space to what is called 'Matrimonial Correspondence.' Under this head, ladies and gentlemen who desire to enter into the bonds of wedlock, insert descriptions of themselves and of the paragon they are in search of. Occasionally a portrait is sent—usually a photograph—which is engraved above the description. Sometimes a name is given, but more commonly an initial, the address being confided to the editor, who 'mails' all letters, sent by way of reply, to the respective parties.

It may be said that this is only a variety of the matrimonial agency said to exist in Paris, and not entirely unknown in our own country. There is, however, this important distinction between the two—that whereas in France the negotiation is conducted with some degree of privacy, and is known only to the persons interested, or supposed to be so, in America the candidate publishes his offer to the world at large. It is not very difficult to imagine how the system is found to operate. Cœlebs, who goes little into society, or whose tastes are fastidious, takes up this valuable paper, say at breakfast, and straightway his eye falls upon that pink of perfection which he has sought for in vain. The hand, with its piece of buttered cake, is stayed on its way to his mouth, he bends eagerly over the description, his coffee perhaps grows cold, but no matter—he thinks she would suit him! Presently he draws up an account of his own advantages, and forwards it to the editor. Perhaps a photograph goes with it; but engraved portraits do not admit of being highly coloured, while those of the pen do: usually, therefore, he prefers the latter. The rest is darkness and silence. The imagination of the uninitiated reader must supply the dénouement. In the observation of scientific phenomena, we note effects the causes of which are frequently concealed, but in this experimental philosophy of matrimony, the causes lie on the surface, while the effects are left to conjecture.

The 'gentlemen's department' of this correspondence is likely to be the more amusing to the general reader, shewing as it does the several candidates to be possessed of every merit, except perhaps that of modesty. If we may take the various statements *au pied de la lettre*, we shall be surprised to find men of all ranks and very different ages coming forward to find wives. In the number which I hold in my hand, one column is appropriately headed by a military officer, whose portrait represents him in full costume, and who is introduced by the editor with the following flourish of trumpets:

'Col. T. B. M——e has called at our sanctum with one of Brady's best photographs of himself, and begs that we will present his claims to the fair readers of our paper as a candidate for matrimony. We know the colonel intimately, and can say, that although a few hairs of iron-gray are sprinkled among his raven locks, yet they were caused by exposure among the glades of Florida, and the well-fought fields of Mexico, where he distinguished himself by his valour, and are not sown there by years, for he is but thirty. He holds a commission in the U. S. army, and his family is one of the oldest in the country. His youthful escapades are pretty generally known among his acquaintance, and hence he is looked upon with some distrust. But we know him to be the very soul of honour, and have advised him thus publicly to confess the error of his past ways, and throw himself upon our fair readers' mercy, in the full confidence that some bright eye may be captivated by his manly beauty, and love and marry him.'

The reason given for the colonel's public appeal is rather novel, and it may be doubted whether the fair readers of the paper would be disposed to extend their pity to a man who is in such bad odour with the ladies who know him, as to be compelled to seek a wife among those who don't.

Next appears the portrait of a gentleman whose hair has been singularly well curled by the artist, and who introduces himself in rhyme:

To all fair ladies who may view this page,
A gentleman of six-and-twenty years of age
Politely begs to make his wishes known.
He would not live—or rather—live alone.
His form and features let the portrait tell,
On these his modesty forbids him dwell.
He needs a lady with a pretty face,
A modest fortune, and a winning grace,
A temper suited to an honest mind,
Which to her slightest wish shall be inclined.
A mercenary wretch he may be branded,
But his best wishes are to be most candid:
She must have money; though indeed at present
He fears no poverty, still 'tis not pleasant
To dream or think a day of want may come
To the young lady whom he leadeth home.
And yet to prove no sordid ends combine
To make him pen the seeming selfish line,
He hereby covenants, agrees, engages
To settle on herself and the sweet pledges
Of her affection, all that she may own,
And asks for *his* love but *her heart* alone.

GUSTAVUS EDWARDS.

The ladies will hardly fail to appreciate the charming air of candour, which, like a transparent varnish, shines over this announcement. To dread that 'a day of want may come *to the young lady* whom he leadeth home'—what could be more amiable, more considerate?

The next correspondent describes himself as a merchant doing a successful business, and alludes to his affairs by asking, 'what a paltry 3000 dollars a year can be to the great house of A——n Brothers & Co.' (the lady he is addressing being in possession of that sum). Then we have an author who candidly says that 'his fortune may be best expressed by an indefinite number of ciphers, with the unit at the left' (meaning the right probably). If, however, he spends his money, he works for more, and has enough to afford a wife every comfort.

Many of these applications appear to be unavailing; nobody comes to be married, nobody comes to be wooed. Others are more fortunate, and I observe one case in which a candidate receives more than one reply. A certain Mr George Hubbard, who describes himself as a widower, and whose portrait represents a pleasant-looking man of middle age, says he would be glad to marry again. Next week, two ladies send their portraits and compliments to him, which are duly presented in the journal. The contrast between the fair rivals is very striking. The first, with the signature of a 'Strong-minded Woman,' describes herself in these terms:

'I am possessed of little sentiment, and do not believe in love in a cottage, and think pork and beans are more necessary to human existence than moonlight rambles or serenades. I am unable to boast of numerous conquests over the gentlemen, but assure you I am *some* in making pumpkin-pies. I do not understand the glorious art of painting, but my whitewashing will surpass competition. My modesty will not allow a description of my personal appearance, but I will say that I have neither red hair nor freckles. Wishing my various accomplishments may suffice, I beg you will address STRONG-MINDED WOMAN.'

The second writes in a strain so simple and sincere, that anywhere out of print I should call it charming:

'MR HUBBARD—I notice in the *Ledger* a picture of yourself: it pleases me exceedingly. I would be happy to open a correspondence with you.

'My age is twenty-two. I don't know how you would be pleased with me, but I truly wish you might, for I feel a deep interest in your picture. I should be happy to write further particulars.—Affectionately yours, JENNIE WIGGEN.'

The portrait which accompanies this letter gives a very favourable representation of the writer, but it produced no effect. The ladies may be interested to know that the pumpkin-pie carried the day, and that next week Mr Hubbard wrote a long reply to the Strong-minded Woman, in which he congratulated himself on his good-fortune in having attracted her notice.

The question what the ladies like must always be of deep interest to a large majority of the other sex. That question—the difficulties of which have hardly been diminished by the imaginative powers of writers of fiction—is to some extent elucidated in this correspondence. If any confidence may be placed in the evidence, it appears that prospective husbands are not required to have money; wit is seldom wanted, and good looks can scarcely be said to be at a premium. An amiable disposition is indispensable, and so is youth; a good family very desirable; a manly and honourable nature much in request. Those qualities are required which, in America as here, are comprised in the emphatic word *gentleman*. Tobacco is in general objected to; but cigars, if required, are tolerated. Surely the age of chivalry is indeed gone, when a lady is compelled to endure the 'weeds' on taking a husband, as commonly as to wear them on losing him.

The gentlemen are much more fastidious; one and all of them want something very nearly angelic. They usually take credit to themselves for magnanimously relinquishing some one attribute of perfection. Books on female education condemn the pursuit of surface accomplishments in preference to the more solid acquirements which are really valuable to the mistress of a household. It would appear, however, that the latter are attractive rather to persons of the age of Mr Hubbard, than to younger men.

One young lady, of the interesting name of Lola, appears to have advertised herself in a sheet we have not seen, and to have met with very considerable success; the editor informing her that he had mailed four letters to her this week, keeping back the rest 'because the writers neglected to pay the postage.' Lola exposed her portrait to public competition, and here is in one case the result.

'CHICOPEE, *July* 1856.

DEAR SIR—Last week, while perusing your *Ledger of Romance* for August 2, my attention was attracted to a very beautiful picture of Miss Lola C——l of Springfield, Mass. Her picture strikes me exceedingly, and should like very much to cultivate her acquaintance with a view of matrimony. I am a young man twenty-two years old, and most exemplary character; my figure is good, five feet nine inches in height; hair and eyes are black; I am considered handsome by most of the young ladies. I am of good family, and have a good profession. With respect to matrimony, I have always considered it the only thing necessary to complete a man's happiness on this earth, and would most readily with her enter that state of bliss.—Yours with kind regard, DANIEL RAYMOND, Chicopee.'

Another gentleman of the same age is also taken with Lola's picture, and would be happy to make her acquaintance with a view to matrimony; but he adds —or the acquaintance of any other young lady. His chief object is to find a conjugal companion for a tour in Europe.

All this may be amusing to read about—and I hope it is—but in practice it wears a very different aspect. It will not do to judge the manners of a distant though kindred people by our own standard of unconquerable reserve; but the custom of wearing one's heart not on one's sleeve, but in the morning paper, can hardly be regarded in a very favourable light. The purity and delicacy which encircle with a glorious halo the head of young womanhood, seem somewhat imperiled by a process which is little else than a public auction. Even the fortunate man who in personal qualifications outbids his competitors, cannot reflect with much satisfaction on the fact, that she who sits by his side has been the subject of public advertisement. If Cœlebs cannot find courage to pay his addresses to a lady in the ordinary way, it would surely be better that he should pay his court like Window Wat, without the door, than through the newsman.

EMIGRATION TO AMERICA MADE EASY.

THE difficulty an emigrant from Europe finds is not in getting to America. The middle-passage has no horrors for him; but no sooner does his foot touch the soil of republican freedom, than his progress is arrested, and if he should have the good-fortune ever to reach his destination at all, it is not till loss of time, money, and peace of mind has left him half frantic and half a beggar. We are now of course alluding specially to the more ignorant class of emigrants, and to the system of private swindling of which they are the victims; though all classes find more or less difficulty and delay in reaching the part of the continent they are bound for: we are alluding to what the *Toronto Colonist* calls 'the monstrous villainies practised upon emigrants at New York, New Orleans, and other ports—villainies which have hitherto baffled all the ingenuities and all the energies of the many humane societies which have sprung up in New York and other places to protect the unsuspecting and friendless emigrant.'

This great evil, however, from present appearances, seems about to cease; for the acute mind of Mr S. P. Bidder, the general manager of the Grand Junction Railway of Canada, has seen the malignant influence it would exercise against that noble work, and against the tide of emigration to British America. He has devised a plan of *through-booking* in the great seaports of Europe, by which the emigrant, or traveller, will take his ticket at once to the place of his ultimate destination on the American continent, and will thus avoid the risk of being fleeced or trepanned in the port where he arrives. 'Agreements have already been made by Mr Bidder, with all the leading railways of the United States, by which passengers, whether emigrants or otherwise, will be passed to any part of Northern and Western America upon tickets issued to them in Europe. Thus, passengers who purchase through-tickets from the agents of the Grand Trunk Railway at Havre, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Bremen, and Hamburg, as well as at Liverpool, Hull, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Belfast, Dublin, Cork, Galway, or any other port which trades with Boston, Portland, Quebec, or Montreal, will be conveyed to any point in Canada to which a railway runs, or to any place in the United States where a leading railway has a station, without the trouble of making even an inquiry, or the delay of a single unnecessary moment. Each passenger will be supplied with a ticket — authenticated by the signature of a duly authorised chief-officer of the Grand Trunk Company—a map of his route, and even a time-table, which, while he will be secured against all imposition, vexations, and delays after he lands, will tell him almost the very hour at which he will arrive at his destination.'

There can be no doubt that this extensive project is one of the greatest utility, and that, if properly carried out, it will have important effects upon the emigration from Europe to America. The Toronto paper, however, looks specially to the Canadian share of the benefit, and not, we think, without cause. 'We need hardly point out the advantage to Canada of the best class of emigrants being conveyed upon its railways, and in view of its splendid soil and settlements. Even supposing that a large number will have made up their minds to go to the far west, many—and these the most wealthy and valuable—will determine to settle where comfort and civilisation mark the people, and the soil and climate unexceptional. It need hardly be said that the whole face of Upper Canada is one wide advertisement of such characteristics. The farmhouses, the fences, the stock, the villages, the churches and school-houses, the horses and carriages, and the dresses and well-to-do appearance of the Canadian agriculturists, speak at every turn, in favour of their country to every man who desires a comfortable residence for himself and a future home for his children. So that, apart from the emigrants who may come with the direct intention of settling in Canada, we are sure to get many who, not understanding America, or probably with mistaken notions of the British provinces, may have determined to settle elsewhere. The through-ticket system will, in short, allow Canada to advertise herself; and she wanted no better advertisements at the London and Paris Exhibitions, and will require none better to the intending settlers of North America.'

Sir Cusack Roney, the secretary of the Grand Trunk Company, is co-operating with Mr Bidder in the European part of the arrangements; and when all is ready, in addition to his present duties, he will retain the superintendence of the through-booking system. If judiciously carried out, as we doubt not it will be, the best results will follow for all parties. The benefit will not be confined to Canada. By the system of railways now in full operation, emigrants can be carried direct from Quebec, or from Portland in Maine, to the banks of the St Clair in the extreme west of Canada, and thence pursue railway routes through Michigan to Wisconsin, and other attractive places of settlement in the north-western regions of the United States. In short, in a day or two after landing on American soil, and with no kind of trouble, the emigrant will find himself at his new home. Such a prodigious convenience, robs emigration of its terrors, and must set hundreds of timid families wandering. As the notices of this through-ticket system will probably excite inquiry, we recommend that the authorised places for procuring tickets should be made well known by advertisements.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVES.

Our wrongs were countless as the sands
Of that dread soil whereon we stood:
With thongs they bound our plighted hands,
They scourged us—even to blood;
They smote our first-born midst his play,
They seized and sold him far away.

I looked upon his mother's face;
'Twas blank as is a starless night
When the round moon has left her place,
And there is no more light;
And cold upon her blighted cheek
Lay the strong grief she might not speak.

I said: 'In yonder dreary swamp
Afar shall we two hide our wo?'
Then first her eye with tears grew damp,
She said: 'My love, we'll go;
For thy lost sake, my child, my child,
We'll go and madden in the wild!'

We had no home from which to part,
As through the blooming rice we stole;
Our home was in each other's heart,
And in the God-sent soul
Which dared the wrath of man to brave,
Though groaning in a tortured slave.

The long night-shadows veiled our flight
As, breathless, we pursued our way;
But dreadful as the white man's sight,
So dreadful was the day:
If God's blest light our path revealed,
Too well we knew our doom was sealed.

And daylight broke: the hunt was up!
We caught their shouts upon the gale;
And we must drain the bitter cup
If once our limbs should fail:
Delirium in our every tread,
For life—for death, on—on we sped.

The swamp was gained; and, crouching low,
We dared to breathe the poisoned air.
Behind us, stretched a waste of wo;
Before, the wild beast's lair;
Yet paused we now, or shrank we back,
The Cuban dogs were on our track!

Beyond, upon the thicket's verge,
A lake of stagnant waters lay:
We plunge; our fainting limbs we urge;
We cleave the watery way.
Less than the white man did we dread
The alligator's slimy bed.

A strange relief our bosoms crossed:
The terrors of pursuit were past;
In the dank ooze the trail was lost,
And we were safe at last—
Safe!—midst the horrors of the brake,
The mockeson and the rattlesnake!

I had no fears; the bitter flood
Of wo had drowned each life-born care;
And one beside me breathed, who stood
Between me and despair;
Though that keen anguish which she bore,
Had passed not, shall pass never more.

It seems to bear a spell which holds
The fiercer monsters from their prey:
The serpent with his coiling folds
Will shrink and glide away;
Her eye each deadlier reptile charms,
And I lie safe within her arms.

And we are free!—free! God in heaven
Who caused that word to sound so sweet,
Save those to desperation driven
Beneath the white man's feet;
Who makes, to mar Thy glorious plan,
An outcast of his brother-man! E. L. H.

'A TILT AT MR GOSSE.'

Mr P. H. Gosse does us the honour to write in reference to an article in our number for October 11, 1856, in which some particulars of an anecdote of the killing of a crocodile, given in his *Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica*, are called in question. We do not think it necessary to print Mr Gosse's letter or the documents he transmits to us, but content ourselves with remarking, that he has adduced what seems fair evidence of the correctness of the principal facts reported in his narrative.

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MY NIGHT IN THE HOUSE.

A MAN with a wife and eleven children farming some of his own land, with a little house-property to look after, besides being guardian of the poor, parish vestryman, and perpetual chairman of the Anti-county-rate Movement, has quite enough on his hands to keep him at home. But my country—or rather my county—called me, and with the spirit of an old Roman, I resigned myself to my duty.

It happened in this wise. The supply of gas to our town had been for many years a disgraceful monopoly in the hands of the old company, as it was called. Last year some patriotic citizens, of whom, without vanity, I may say I was one, projected a new association for the purpose of providing Trixbridge with the means of illumination. Everything was done properly and in order. We issued prospectuses, held board meetings, allotted shares, and presented a bill to parliament for the 'Grand Trixbridge Gas, Coke, and Railway Company.' Of course, our bill was opposed tooth and nail by the old monopolising company. When the time came for parliament to decide upon the controversy, I was invited to bear testimony on our side of the question. As the new company intended to buy some of my land, and rent some of my houses for their works, I was naturally well qualified to speak of the excellence of their plans and the indescribable advantages which the bill would confer upon Trixbridge. There was another point. Mr Aspinall, the buff member for our borough, was suspected of favouring the old company. Now when he came down for his election, the honourable member—he was really an honourable—and myself were on the most friendly terms. So attached, indeed, had he shewn himself to me, and so domestically delighted with the society of Mrs Burtonshaw and our family altogether, that I had not only voted for him myself, but had contrived to secure him the votes of two sons, three nephews, one brother-in-law, and half-a-dozen electors with whom I happened to be connected in business. Our board, therefore, thought that if I were on the spot, and put the matter in a proper light to the honourable member, he might be induced to help us forward with our bill.

Thus it was that, after much solicitation, for the good of my country, I came up to London. There I stayed some weeks, passing much time in the committee-room of the House of Commons, but also not omitting to visit every place which was mentioned to me as worth seeing in or near the metropolis. My various adventures upon these tours of inspection are far too numerous to be here related. On the whole, I found the time pass very pleasantly, even though away from my home and Mrs Burtonshaw. Everybody was exceedingly polite. My accommodations were excellent, and, what I had not expected, the eatables and drinkables supplied by the London hotel-keepers, really not amiss. About their cost, I am not able to speak, as the company paid the bill; but I never heard of any complaint on that score.

As for the other bill, the expectations of the board were completely realised. The Honourable Mr Aspinall, after a little conversation with me, shewed himself really enthusiastic on behalf of our project. 'The Grand Trixbridge Gas, Coke, and Railway Company was,' he said, 'a magnificent example of the benefits resulting from the great principle of association, and the whole scheme justified the character of England as the greatest commercial country in the world.' His admiration went further than mere words. He helped us famously with our bill in the committee, and made a fine speech about us in the House upon the 'second reading,' of which I was sorry to find, next day, that the stupid chatter going on in the House all the time prevented the reporters from hearing a single word.

In spite of this, however, we got our bill; and this glorious triumph was the occasion of my passing a 'night in the House' such as I shall never forget.

It was on the evening when the 'bill'—of course I mean the Grand Trixbridge Gas, Coke, and Railway Company's Bill—finally passed the House of Commons. Our excellent member had got me a seat in the Speaker's Gallery; he came and sat beside me there, and pointed out the celebrities of the House. I saw the premier, Lord John, Mr Dizzy, and other people, ministerial and oppositional, whose names I already knew. Besides these, I was lucky enough to see Lord Octavius Fitzhugh, our county representative, and his colleague, Mr Wire Cartridge, whose presence on this occasion was the more important, seeing that they so rarely attend the House. For half an hour and more I sat still, trying to hear what was said amidst the gabble going on upon all sides, and the noise made by members coming, going, and circulating like ants in a hillock, though not quite so silently, and possibly without doing so much work. Presently a member, whose face I knew—it was our other representative—stood up near the Speaker, flourishing a paper in his hand.

'That's our bill,' said Mr Aspinall—'to be "read a third time."'

I listened with all my ears, but could not even catch the title; all I heard were the words 'do pass.' But my companion, who knew the ways of the place, rose with a satisfied air and said:

'So that's all right, and now we can go to dinner.'

To celebrate our anticipated success, Messrs Pouncey and Co., our parliamentary agents, had invited the whole batch of us—members, directors, witnesses, solicitors; every one, in short, connected with the bill and the company—to a grand spread. Whether the cost figured in their account, I never heard, but believe not, at all events in that identical shape. But this was no concern of mine. The viands were excellent, and so was the wines. We did ample justice to both. The dinner came off in one of the handsome members' refreshment-rooms in the new palace of legislation. All the appointments, even to the plates and dishes, had 'House of Commons,' written in the black-letter which Mr Barry is so fond of, stamped upon them. The massive silver forks and spoons were thus marked, and bore, besides, the gridiron—or portcullis, as Mr Aspinall called it—the arms of the city of Westminster. This made them, he told us, national property; and any thief who carried off a single spoon would be guilty of high treason, and punished like Colonel Blood, who stole the king's crown some hundred years ago.

We had a jolly dinner, but broke up early, as everybody but myself seemed to have business to do. The House, we learned, had got into a debate, which promised to be long. As we left the dining-room, Mr Aspinall politely proposed to shew me some of the curiosities of the edifice, which I was most anxious to see. Barry's palace is nearly as big as a town; and one might go to the lobby, or the committee-room, or anywhere else that business called one for a year together, without guessing at a tenth part of the vast size and contents of the pile. So we went on, and up, and round, and down again, through a series of halls, ante-chambers, galleries, and winding staircases that seemed endless and countless. I saw a great deal of painting, and a great deal more carving, and heard a number of curious stories about both from my guide, who was exceedingly affable, and seemed to know everything. Yet I cannot say I remember much of what passed. The truth is, that between the corkscrew staircases and the blazing gas, and seeing so many things at once, my head grew quite dizzy, until I scarcely knew where I was. It was quite a relief to me when, as we were passing down another long corridor, a sharp rattle of bells broke upon us, apparently from all sides at once, and kept ringing away in volleys with extraordinary perseverance.

'By Jove,' said Mr Aspinall, 'there's the division-bell! I must rush off, or they will have locked the doors. Wait here for me a few minutes, and I'll come and fetch you when it is over. A thousand pardons.'

With this brief apology, he made a dash at a small door, leading, I suppose, by some short-cut, into the House, and disappeared. I sat down on a bench in a windowed recess, and felt glad of the opportunity to rest a little and clear the cobwebs from my brain. How long I sat there, I don't know; it seemed only a few minutes, but I fancy I fell asleep. When consciousness returned, it was still some time before I could recollect precisely where I was, or how I came there. The gallery seemed to stretch an almost infinite distance right and left. The lights were burning dim, and a pale gleam was thrown across at intervals from the sky outside, for the night was clear and moonlight. I felt shivering and a little frightened. Perhaps, I thought, I had no business there. My guide was gone, and if caught trespassing, what account could I give of myself? Yet I did not know which way to turn for an outlet.

Just then, I saw some dark figures in the distance coming down the gallery. They carried lanterns, and one of them had what looked like a huge black snake coiled up under his arm. As I learned afterwards, they were firemen carrying leathern hose, which were placed every night close at hand to the water-plugs distributed over every part of the building. It was the precaution regularly adopted to prevent the recurrence of such a catastrophe as that which befell in 1834.

As the men passed, I shrunk up in my recess, and thought it lucky they went by without seeing me. After they were out of sight, I made a desperate effort to escape from my questionable position, and tried at the door through which, as I believed, my friend the member had previously passed. The door opened to my hand, but was the wrong one. I went through nevertheless, and found myself in a lofty and handsome room, quite filled with the moonlight that streamed through an expansive casement opposite the entrance. I walked to the window, and saw that it overlooked the Thames. The moon was high and bright. I could distinguish the bridge on the left, where the repairs were still going on, and the gray towers of Lambeth Palace on the other side of the river. All at once it flashed across me that I had been in the room before. It was a committee-room—the very one where we fought our bill so often, or else a facsimile. Now I knew where I was.

Before I had time to act on this knowledge, however, a step approached the door. I heard the handle tried, but no one entered. Then came the sharp click of a lock. Some vigilant watchman had found the door unfastened, and turned the key without looking in. I was too frightened to call out at the moment; but in a minute afterwards went and tried the door myself. It was too true—I was locked in. What made the case worse, it was Friday night. To-morrow was the legislative holiday. Not a soul was likely to come near the place until committee-time on Monday. Here, then, I thought, am I shut up, starving for forty hours, and, when released, may be arrested for a burglar.

The prospect was not reassuring. I went to the window again, but there was no escape that way. The casement was high up, and fastened besides. Far below, I saw the brown belt of mud left by the tide, which was at ebb, and a tier of barges lying aground in it. But no human being was visible, nor, if I shouted for help, could I have made myself heard at that distance. I did not like the look of things at all.

Coming back into the room, I sat down in the chairman's well-padded seat before the committee-table, and fell into a brown study. The thought then passed across me, that perhaps there were other doors to the place, some one of which might be unfastened. I got up and groped round the wall, particularly in the shady corner where the moonlight could not reach. Before long, I found what I sought. A door there was—a handle—it turned in my grasp—the means of exit were clear. The door, I concluded, led to one of those privileged entrances marked 'Private: for members only.' However, I was too glad to escape to stand on punctilios. I passed out into a sort of ante-chamber leading into a lobby, and thence into a short corridor almost dark, but I managed to find my way to the end which opened upon a well-staircase. Far down a single gaslight was burning, which threw its rays up the shaft. The place grim and lonesome enough; but I was fairly in for it, so down I went.

Down, and still downwards, the well-staircase led me. I reached and passed the gaslight; the place grew gloomier as I sunk further below its influence; yet I went on hoping to get at last into the central hall, or at anyrate to find myself somewhere whence I could emerge from the trap. At last I reached a ponderous iron-bound door, which I pushed boldly open, and went through. Now, thinks I, we must have reached *terra firma*.

A few steps more shewed my mistake. I stood on the brink of another flight of stairs, leading down to some vast and black abyss. Some straggling rays of light, coming I knew not whence nor how, served partially to reveal the extent and profundity of the cavern, into which I peered with a shudder. From its depths a chill, damp vapour floated heavily up. I scarcely ventured more than a glance into the yawning chasm before me, but drew back hastily to regain the upper air.

At this moment the door above me closed with a thundering clang! The sound reverberated in a long subterranean roll through the vault, and seemed to lose itself at last in infinite space. At that moment, however, escape was uppermost in my thoughts, and I felt my way to the door, and was horrified to discover that it had shut close, and remained fastened by its own massive weight. There was no handle or key in the inside: its smooth surface presented nothing for the grasp.

After a while, I left off trying to open it, and ceased shouting for help. By that time, I had got more accustomed to the gloom, and looking below, saw that there was light enough there to make a sort of darkness visible. Escape by the way I had entered was clearly impossible; so I descended the few steps still left, which landed me at the bottom. I found myself apparently in the very centre of a vast and interminable cavern. The staircase, down which I had come, was built within a massive dwarf pillar that rose from the floor to the ceiling. In front, a long row of similar pillars stretched in endless succession; to right and left other avenues, also flanked by columns of dark stone, extended as far as the eye could reach. Behind me, as I passed round the shaft through which I had descended, the series was still prolonged with no visible termination. Starting out, here and there, from the pillars, were tongues of gas flame, which flickered in the night-wind, and threw a ghastly sepulchral light over the vault. These lights seemed to burn without human interposition. They had evidently burnt through night and day, through session and recess, ever since the edifice was erected. Their presence seemed rather to increase than diminish the intense feeling of solitude, of supernatural gloom and vastness, which weighed upon me as I gazed around.

Then it flashed upon my mind that I must have got to the basement story of the palace of legislation, of which I had heard so many legends. The subterranean area, I knew, contained the vaults beneath St Stephen's Chapel, which were the scene of Guy Fawkes's conspiracy; but they now comprised much more. There were tales concerning the place in modern days—how that men had lost their way in its interminable recesses, and left nothing but skeletons, discovered months after their disappearance, and recognised only by the marks inside their boots. The very notion threw me into a cold perspiration, and I sunk back on the steps, down which I had just come, to recover breath and presence of mind.

Sitting there was not the way to escape, as I presently bethought myself. I started up, determined upon prosecuting an eager and methodical voyage of discovery. Surely there must be some means of exit from the huge dungeon which might be found by searching. I blessed the authorities who maintained the gaslights, dim though they were, in every part of the cavern: if it had been completely dark, I were lost indeed.

I walked down the stone avenues and round the huge columns; they seemed innumerable and interminable. The roof was arched between the pillars, and on every side were carvings of Gothic design, but roughly and imperfectly executed. It seemed like an embryo creation of the sculptures which had arrived at such redundant maturity above. The ceiling was low, and the huge columns with their vast diameters looked portentously massive from the want of height. I had heard often of the 'pillars of the constitution,' but never saw them before. But the lowering roof, stretching away on every side into such vast expanse, oppressed me with its weight; it seemed constantly about to fall on my head. I stood still more than once, with an awful sensation, as if the constitution were on the point of tumbling in.

While these ideas passed through my bewildered brain, I was traversing through and round a monstrous succession of pillars. In several of them were doors, some of which proved to be fast; others opened upon winding flights of steps, like that I had descended into this world underground. Up, then, I went, with a dogged sort of persistence, turn after turn, groping in the dark and twisting round and round, to find myself invariably stopped at length by another door which I could not pass. I went up so many stairs, and they were all so like one another, that at last I grew quite puzzled. I remembered hearing that there were ninety-six staircases in the palace of Westminster; but it seemed to me at the time that I must have tried at least a hundred and fifty.

The next I attempted gave me a glimpse of hope, lost through my own folly. I got up without obstacle much higher than before, cheered by a light half-way. There was a door as usual, but luckily open. I passed on and up again, and reached a narrow corridor leading evidently to some inhabited district of the place. Before me, as I turned a corner, there suddenly flashed the apparition of a huge fire burning brightly in a wide grate. This formed the background of the picture. Nearer were shelves displaying a goodly array of crockery, and dressers glistening with plate. I was in the kitchen of the House. Before I had time to think, an approaching footstep struck on my ear. At that moment I felt so like a thief, that I fancied I should be taken for one. Recollections of the stories told us at dinner about Colonel Blood and the crown jewels came into my mind with a sort of thrill. In a panic, I turned and fled down the steps, like one escaping from a guilty conscience, and it was not until I had gone some distance among the turnings and windings of the pillars, that I recovered from my fright; then, indeed, I repented my absurd alarm, and sought to regain my way to the kitchen, but found I had lost the clue. I went round and round a hundred columns, and groped up many stairs, but could not discover the one I was looking for. Wearied at last with these perpetual clamberings, I threw myself upon a stone bench, and, as I fancy, slept.

I woke up shivering, hungry, desperate, and frightened. My nervous system was shaken by my sufferings in gloom and solitude. I longed, and yet dreaded, to hear a voice or meet with a fellow-being. In this state of trepidation I wandered on again; presently I came upon a singular scene, which did not tend to reassure me. The floor of the vault opened into a huge circular chasm, whence arose, in grim and fantastic outline, the shapes of wheels, and bars, and cylinders, glimmering in the dim light with most spectral aspect. Looking aloft, I saw the roof also pierced with a circular opening, in which was a vast apparatus of vanes, like a colossal smoke-jack, or wind-mill turned horizontally. On one side was another congeries of mechanism, which I recognised as a steam-engine. But everything was still, and dusty, and rusty. It looked as if unused for years, and passing rapidly into the ghostly state of existence. The concern was, as I afterwards learned, the old 'ventilator' of the House of Commons, long since abolished as a nuisance.

From this point I again roamed on, without guide or purpose, I cannot say how far or how long; my brain had got into a dreamy condition, and the only impression remaining was one of terror and loneliness. It seemed as if I had been buried in this cavern for twenty years. What next restored me to full consciousness was the breath of fresh air, bringing with it a dull murmur of winds and waters; I looked up, and saw a patch of sky bright with moonlight.

I had reached the river-end of the subterranean vault. Above me was a barred grating, opening upon the outer world; some loose heaps of broken stone and brick lay piled against the wall. I climbed up, and grasping the bars, placed my face close against them, inhaling with inexpressible delight the warm and balmy air from the river. The scene was the same which I had gazed upon some hours before from the committee-room; but I viewed it now from below. The moon by this time had fallen and the water risen; the Thames was now brimful between its banks; heavy barges were floating and 'wabbling' about at their moorings. The moonbeams brought out into strong relief the Lambeth Palace towers and riverside buildings on the other side, and drew a pathway of light across the dancing waters, almost up to my grating. For some minutes I clung desperately to the bars, and gazed out like one just emerging from the tomb.

Again I was disturbed and frightened by steps and voices. Two men approached with measured tread; I knew they were policemen, and my terror returned. I fell away from the grating, and in reaching the ground, knocked over a rumbling pile of stones from the heap. The policemen were startled as well as myself at the noise, and came up to the grating hoarsely shouting their customary challenge to trespassers. I slunk up close to the wall below the range of the bull's-eye lantern. As they passed the light along the grating, the shadows of its bars were thrown into colossal relief upon the pillar opposite, and trooped past like a file of black giants in solemn procession.

'There's nothing there, Simmons,' said one of the men at last: 'it must have been the ghost of Guy Fawkes. He haunts the old cellar still, they say.'

'More likely,' replied his companion, 'it was some rats out of the sewer. I'll speak to the clerk of the works to have the holes trapped again.'

'Why, there's plenty of rats up above in the House, let alone those in the sewer,' rejoined the first speaker.

The men laughed, and walked away; when they had passed out of hearing, I got up to renew my efforts at extrication. The brief glimpse I had obtained of the free world had inspired an irrepressible longing for air and liberty.

At length I was cheered by prospects of success. I came to a region of the cavern where several arches were built up with wooden partitions, forming what looked like store-rooms or offices. Here and there were windows, through which I could see big piles of paper. I found a door or two, but they were locked. Around were sundry packing-cases, a dismounted printing-press, and other signs of human frequentation. At anyrate, I was in the neighbourhood of my fellow-creatures.

After a little more wandering, I came to another doorway and flight of steps. I had been up a hundred before without avail; but this time the symptoms were more encouraging: the stairs were wood instead of stone, and lighted from above. I ascended, with a desperate resolve to escape; the time was past for fearing detection: let the worst happen, people are not sent to the Tower in these days.

It was all right. I reached the top without obstruction. Then came a long vaulted corridor, and at the end a double swing-door with glass panels, protected by a fretted *grille* of brass-work. Through this door, as I opened it, there came a gush of hot air, which, loaded with gas and breath as it was, seemed to me the most delightful breeze I had ever inhaled.

On passing through, I found myself in a vast and lofty hall, so brilliant with lights, that for the moment I was dazzled. I saw only a single figure, quaintly dressed, and with a sword by his side, who shouted in sonorous tones as I entered: 'Who goes home!'

The words thrilled through me. For hours I had been doubting whether I should ever see my home again! By an irresistible impulse I rushed forward and caught him by the arm: 'I will,' I said; 'for God's sake, take me home!'

The man looked scared, as well he might. But at this moment there came forward a procession, headed by a solemn-looking personage in flowing robes and full-bottomed wig, marching on with all the attributes of grave authority and respect. I recognised the dignified functionary whom I had seen early in the evening occupying the chair of the House. Behind him came an irregular throng of members. It was Mr Speaker. The House was just up, and the invitation to which I had responded so unexpectedly, was only that unabolished formula, derived from times when a guard of representatives was sometimes necessary to convoy the Speaker safely to his home.

My appearance caused a momentary pause. It was no doubt sufficiently singular. Covered with dust and cobwebs, my dress soiled, my hat battered, my hair dishevelled, with the haggard hang-dog look derived from my long anxiety and subterranean wanderings, I must have looked anything but the respectable character I have always tried to maintain. Mr Speaker laughed distinctly; the man with the sword caught me by the collar, and looked for a policeman.

At this crisis, a well-known and welcome voice cried: 'Why, 'tis Burtonshaw, by all that's wonderful! Where, on earth, did you come from, my good fellow? and what have you been doing with yourself?'

It was Aspinall, *my* member for Trixbridge. He released me from a very awkward scrape; and a few words from me explained all necessary particulars.

'And so you have been roaming in darkness and cold for these six hours in the regions below,' he said at last; 'but come along, 'tis hardly two o'clock yet. A brush and cold water will put you to rights; and, egad, we'll make a night of it yet!'

I know that we did not get home till morning, and that the next few hours were spent far more pleasantly than the last half-dozen had been. But nothing occurred either then or since to efface the recollection of the sufferings and sensations I had experienced during My Night in the House.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA AFFAIR.

It will be recollected that on the occasion of constituting the state of Missouri, in 1820, there was a compromise among parties to the effect that, in all the territory which had been ceded by France north of 36° 30′, the state of Missouri excepted, slavery should be for ever prohibited; and the act which admitted the state to the Union bore a clause of this kind. Here was a law settling the question so far, one would think. Events proved that this was not so certain. Missouri having edged itself in as a slave state, there the affair rested; and when, in 1836, a slice of fresh free territory was added to this slave state, the compromise-clause does not appear to have been agitated. It was reserved for Mr Pierce's first congress to be troubled with the resurrection of a measure which the bulk of the members—and Pierce to boot—had probably begun to hope was past being brought to life. On the 15th of December 1853, a bill was submitted to the senate to organise the territory of Nebraska; and on this occasion the unhappy compromise rises from the dead. Let us look at our maps, and see where lies the region which was to provoke one of the severest contests that has ever occurred in or out of congress.

Nebraska was the name at first given to a large tract of country, having on the east Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota, and stretching from 36° 30′ or thereabouts, to 49° on the border of Canada. Its limits on the west were New Mexico, Utah, Oregon, and Washington. The more eastern portion of this vast territory, was fertilised by the rivers Platte, Kaw or Kansas, and other tributaries of the Missouri, and its only occupants were certain tribes of Indians. The rich lands on the borders of the rivers, and beyond them the rolling and flowery prairies, were, however, becoming too attractive to be much longer exempted from the ever-operating law of Anglo-American migration. The federal government had begun to cause regular explorations west of Missouri, about 1838, but on so imperfect a scale, that fresh and much more extensive investigations were ordered in 1842; the commander of the scientific explorers on this occasion being Lieutenant John Charles Fremont. The history of this journey of discovery to the shores of the Pacific is full of romantic incident, and as affording accurate accounts of that great western wilderness which will shortly afford a home for millions of civilised men, is deserving of more notice than it has generally obtained in Europe. Fremont, 'the pathfinder,' was eminently successful in his explorations through the obscure passes of the Rocky Mountains. On one of the topmost peaks of this lofty range, upwards of 13,000 feet above sea-level, he gallantly waved in triumph the national flag, where, as he says, 'never flag waved before.'

The discoveries of Fremont opened the way for settlements, but none, except in an irregular manner, could take place till the territory was organised and surveyed; and these final measures were pushed on by Missourians and others personally acquainted with the capabilities of the unappropriated lands. Among the parties who urged forward the bill for organising the territory, there could hardly fail to be a consciousness that, as Nebraska lay directly north of 36° 30′, it was exempted from the contamination of slavery, in virtue of the compromise. But, then, was this compromise of abiding effect—was it a compromise at all? All admitted, what was undeniable, that there was a statute which guaranteed that all lands north of the line 36° 30′, should be consecrated to freedom. This awkward difficulty was got rid of by declaring that the statute was unconstitutional, an interference with the rights of squatter sovereignty. As for there having been a compromise, where was it seen in any valid obligation? It was only a fond tradition, of no binding effect whatsoever. There may have been some mutual concessions among parties when the Missouri bill was passed, more than thirty years ago; but what had the present generation to do with the parliamentary stratagems of a past age? Besides, the compromise measures of 1850 affirm and rest upon the proposition, 'that all questions pertaining to slavery in the territories, and the new states to be formed therefrom, are to be left to the decision of the people residing therein, by their appropriate representatives, to be chosen by them for that purpose.'* According to this view of the subject, the Missouri compromise of 1820 was over-ridden by Clay's omnibus measure of 1850, which was said to obliterate the line 36° 30′ from the map. Neither branch of congress unanimously adopted so sweeping a doctrine. The progress of the bill, which speedily assumed a form for organising two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, was opposed at every step.

Again, expostulation was useless. The bill passed both branches of the legislature in May 1854, the majority, as customary on similar questions, being swelled by northern Whigs. An act was accordingly framed for organising Kansas and Nebraska as separate territories, with the whole apparatus of local government and legislation; and giving to the inhabitants the right to introduce or reject slavery, on the true squatter-sovereignty principle. The two territories being now fairly established, that kind of rush of settlers ensues which has been previously pictured. In their choice, Nebraska appears to have been passed over in favour of Kansas, which, lying to the south, on the parallel 36° 30′, immediately adjoining Missouri, drew crowds towards it; and, as is well known, became the object of a keen and disorderly competition between the southern slaveholding party and the free-soilers of the north. There was little time to spare. In the old world, kingdoms and principalities have taken centuries to mature. The greater number, after a thousand years of social organisation, have not yet acquired so much as the capacity to keep order at a public meeting, let alone the power of self-government. Even the British monarchy, with all its appliances, seems to be unable to ripen its ordinary run of colonies under a period of some years—indeed, several of the more elderly of these communities are now, after long tutelage, only beginning to walk alone. The United States contrive to arrive at this maturity in a few weeks or months. Kansas was organised on the 30th of May 1854, and on the 29th November following, it was to elect a delegate to represent it in congress. In the short intermediate period, cities, towns, and voting-places were to be established; though, as the materials of architecture were principally deals and canvas, this feat was perhaps no great stretch of genius.

Previously to its organisation, Kansas had become a hopeful field of labour to several missionaries connected with one of the divisions of the Methodist body, which is known to have done good service in carrying a knowledge of religion into remote quarters of the Union. Among those who had set up their tabernacle in Kansas, was a somewhat renowned personage, the Rev. Tom Johnson, who is described as ultra coarse and presuming—a violent pro-slavery partisan, and a ready tool of those planters in Missouri who had an eye to the fertile plains of the territory. This worthy, whose head-quarters were at a place called the Shawnee Mission, a short way from the frontier, held slaves long before the organisation of Kansas—a circumstance which helped materially forward the plan of introducing and holding slaves on a large scale. Of the Rev. Tom's clerical accomplishments, we possess no record. All we know is, that, located in a hulking brick-building at Shawnee Mission, he was a leading man among those who charged themselves with enlightening the Shawnees, Delawares, Kaws, Sacs, Foxes, and other tribes of Indians; some of whom, as our authority states, already possessed in an 'eminent degree the marks of whisky civilisation.'* We do not learn that Tom kept a barrel to aid him in his labours; but that is of no consequence. There were barrels at hand, and they were doing their usual horrid work on the unhappy Indians—a doomed race. The bill opening the territory to white immigration, provided that the natives should not be illegally deprived of their reserves; but no arrangement, however humane, short of the annihilation of whisky, could sustain them in their possessions, and, unless removed, they were evidently destined to become beggars and plagues to society. A number, wisely ceding their lands on reasonable terms, were transferred to localities at a suitable distance, where they remain till a fresh wave of white immigration overtakes them.

As the aborigines, half demoralised, gloomily clear out, the whites pour in; land-offices are opened; 'claims' begin to dot the face of the country; and the cluster of ugly buildings at Shawnee Mission, becomes a rallying-point for the settlers. We are to view Kansas in this transition state in July 1854, when the contest between pro-slavery and anti-slavery emigrants comes distinctly into notice. According to the account of the pro-slavery Missourians, they were stung by newspaper reports that great bands of New Englanders would soon be on their way to introduce free institutions into Kansas. About this time, several joint-stock concerns were formed in the free states for this avowed purpose. One of them, called the New-England Emigrant Aid Company, with a capital stock of 5,000,000 dollars, was legalised by an act of incorporation from the legislature of Massachusetts. The plan proposed by the company was this: Agents were to buy lands in Kansas, and sell them in lots to immigrants, until the territory was organised as a free state; then, all funds being realised, and a dividend declared, the agents were to select a fresh field of operations in order to organise another free state. In short, it was a grand device to give free institutions to all the new territories, one after the other; and if unopposed, there could have been little doubt of its success. These projects alarmed the Missourians—at least, such is their story. It is, however, quite as clear that the pro-slavery men were, from the first, equally on the alert; and we are to conclude that both parties had some time previously determined to run a race for the territory. The committee of congress which afterwards investigated the matter, states in its report, that 'within a few days after the organic law was passed, and as soon as its passage could be known on the border, leading citizens of Missouri crossed into the territory, held squatter meetings, and then returned to their homes. Among the resolutions are the following: That we will afford protection to no abolitionist as a settler of this territory: that we recognise the institution of slavery as already existing in this territory, and advise slaveholders to introduce their property as early as possible.' Then, early in July, a meeting of an association, having the same object in view, takes place at Westport, and resolves that it will hold itself in readiness to remove any and all emigrants who go into Kansas under the auspices of the Northern Emigrant Aid Societies. Thus, two opposite parties were distinctly pitted against each other. Had the Missourians confined themselves to the peaceful settlement of planters and slaves, no fault could be found with them *under the constitution*, however much, on moral grounds, we might have lamented their aggressions. But the pro-slavery men went a step beyond their constitutional rights. Not contenting themselves with a plan of peaceful emigration, they resolved, as we have seen, to gain their ends by violence. One excuse for their outrages is, that in giving a charter of incorporation to the New-England Emigrant Aid Company, the legislature of Massachusetts committed a trespass on the constitution; because no state is warranted in doing anything which will operate on the institutions of another state. For anything we can tell, this may have been an indiscreet and federally unlawful act; but, if such were the case, there was surely legal redress before the supreme courts of the Union. Nothing, in a word, can justify the Missourians in having armed themselves to oppose the settlement of the northern emigrants; and for this they stand condemned in the estimation of all right-thinking persons in Europe and America.

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* *Report of Senate's Committee on Territories, in Reference to Nebraska*, January 1853.

* *The Conquest of Kansas by Missouri and her Allies.* By W. Phillips. Boston. 1856.

A number of quietly disposed emigrants had begun to spread themselves on the banks of the Kaw, when they heard that they were to be attacked. They were discomposed, but not frightened, and stood their ground. It seems to be customary to give the inhabitants of many of the states certain nicknames, by which they are generally known. The natives of Illinois are called *Suckers;* those of Indiana, *Hoosiers;* and the Missourians receive the unpleasant name of *Pukes*. Well, the story ran in Kansas that the Pukes were coming, and soon a squad of them did make their appearance. Phillips, whose work presents the only intelligible narrative of the Kansas troubles that has fallen in our way, gives a graphic account of the Pukes, or 'border ruffians.' They are of several kinds. Those of the unadulterated type, are decided characters. 'Most of them,' he says, 'have been over the plains several times; if they have not been over the plains, the probability is, they have served through the war in Mexico, or seen "a deal of trouble in Texas," or at least run up and down the Missouri river often enough to catch imitative inspiration from the cat-fish aristocracy. I have often wondered where all the hard customers on the Missouri frontier come from. They seem to have congregated here by some law of gravity unexplainable. Perhaps the *easy* exercise of judicial authority in frontier countries may explain their fancy for them. Amongst these worthies, a man is estimated by the amount of whisky he can drink; and if he is so indiscreet as to admit he "drinks no liquor," he is set down as a dangerous character, and shunned accordingly. Imagine a fellow, tall, slim, but athletic, with yellow complexion, hairy faced, with a dirty flannel shirt, red, or blue, or green, a pair of common-place, but dark-coloured pants, tucked into an uncertain altitude by a leather belt, in which a dirty handled bowie-knife is stuck rather ostentatiously, an eye slightly whisky red, and teeth the colour of a walnut. Such is your border ruffian of the lowest type. His body might be a compound of gutta-percha, Johnny-cake, and badly smoked bacon; his spirit, the *refined* part, old Bourbon, "double rectified;" but there is every shade of the border ruffian. Your judicial ruffian, for instance, is a gentleman; that is, as much of a gentleman as he can be without transgressing on his more purely legitimate character of border ruffian. As "occasional imbibing" is not a sin, his character at home is irreproachable; and when he goes abroad into the territory, for instance, he does not *commit* any act of outrage, or vote himself, but after "aiding and comforting" those who do, returns, feeling every inch a *gentleman*. Then there are your less conservative border-ruffian *gentlemen*. They are not so nice in distinctions, and, so far from objecting, rather like to take a hand themselves; but they dress like gentlemen, and are so after a fashion. Between these and the first-mentioned large class, there is every shade and variety; but it takes the whole of them to make an effective brigade; and *then* it is not perfect without a barrel of whisky. The two *gentlemanly* classes of ruffians are so for political effect, or because they fancy it is their interest. The lower class are pro-slavery ruffians, merely because it is the prevalent kind of rascality; the inference is, that they would engage in any other affair in which an equal amount of whisky might be drunk, or as great an aggregate of rascality be perpetrated. Such was the kind of customers who presented themselves to the astonished gaze of the early citizens of Lawrence, while it spread its tent-like butterfly wings, just emerging from its chrysalis state, on the banks of the Kaw.'

The two principal officers appointed by the president to initiate the territorial government, were A. H. Reeder, as governor, and S. D. Lecompte, as chief-justice. Reeder was evidently not the man for the situation. He arrived in October, and the election of a delegate to congress took place, as has been said, on the 29th of November. At this election, Whitfield, the pro-slavery candidate, was returned; but the majority in his favour was swelled by 1729 illegal votes, given by bands of men who crossed the frontier from Missouri—another act totally unjustifiable, and the immediate effect of which was to further excite the people of the northern states, induce acts of retaliation, and exasperate the actual settlers against their neighbours in Missouri.

Dire events followed, but we must leave an account of them to a future number. W. C.

AT THE HÔTEL DESSIN.

What, will you walk with me about the town,
And then go to mine inn and dine?
Comedy of Errors.

'To the Hôtel Dessin,' said I, putting the book in my pocket.

I deny that I am romantic; I deny, unequivocally, that I am influenced by fictitious sympathies. I never was an idealist in my life; I never mean to be one; and yet I told the coachman to drive me to the Hôtel Dessin.

The fact was, that I had been reading the *Sentimental Journey* all the way from St Omer; and when I reached Calais, and jumped into a *fiacre*, the name rose to my lips almost before I was aware of it. So away we rattled through a tangle of gloomy little streets, and into the court-yard of 'mine inn.'

An aristocratic-looking elderly waiter, with a ring and a massive gold watch-chain, sauntered out from a side-office, surveyed me patronisingly, and said in the blandest tone:

'What is it that monsieur desires?'

'A private room to begin with. At what hour is your table d'hôte?'

'We have no table d'hôte at the Hôtel Dessin,' replied the waiter languidly; 'our visitors are served in their apartments.'

'Then let me have a dinner as speedily as possible, and a good one, remember.'

He looked at me again, as if implying that my tone was not sufficiently deferential—yawned, rang a feeble little bell, and sank, exhausted, upon a bench beside the door. A pretty chamber-maid attended the summons.

'Marie, conduct monsieur to one of the vacant rooms on the corridor by the garden. And, Marie, on thy return, my child, bring me a glass of absinthe and water.'

Leaving this gentleman extended on the bench in an ostentatious state of ennui, I followed the neat little feet and ankles of my conductress up stairs and along a passage full of doors. One of these bore an inscription which at once arrested my attention and my footsteps—STERNE'S ROOM.

'Stay, mademoiselle!' I exclaimed; 'can I have this one?'

Marie smiled and shrugged her shoulders. 'Certainly,' she said, unlocking the door. 'The chamber is at monsieur's service. The English adore it. And why? Because somebody or other slept in it many years ago. How droll they are these English! Comment! is monsieur English? Ciel! what a mistake I have committed. Monsieur will never forgive me.'

It needed, however, no great amount of protestation on my part to convince Mademoiselle Marie that I was not in the least affronted; so she drew up the blinds, dusted the table in a pretty ineffectual sort of way with the corner of her little apron, hoped that monsieur would ring if he required anything, and tripped gaily out of the room.

As for me, I threw myself into a chair and surveyed my new quarters. A portrait of Sterne hung over the fireplace. It was painted on panel, oval-shaped, dark with age and varnish, and looked as though it had been taken during his visit to Calais—if one might judge by the cracks and stains of it. The cheek rested on the hand; the eyes were turned full upon me with that expression of keen penetration which characterises every one of his portraits. I sat for a long time looking at it, till the waiter came and prepared the table.

'And now, garçon,' said I, after a considerable interval, during which I had been very satisfactorily employed—'and now, garçon, do you really mean to tell me that this is Sterne's room?'

'Upon my honour, monsieur,' replied the waiter, laying his hand upon his heart.

'But how can you be certain after three-quarters of a century, or perhaps more, have gone by?'

'The event, monsieur,' said the waiter, 'has been preserved in the archives of the house. We pledge ourselves to the veracity of the statement.'

I surveyed the man with admiration. He was the grandest waiter I had ever seen in my life, and I had had some little experience, too.

'What wine does monsieur desire for his dessert?'

I hesitated. Under ordinary circumstances, I should have said port or champagne; but his sublimity abashed me. I ordered a bottle of Johannisberger.

To my right lay a delicious garden, radiant with beds of verbena and scarlet geranium, and flooded with the evening sunlight. The great trees nodded and whispered, and the windows at the opposite side of the quadrangle shone like burnished gold. I threw open the *jalousies*, wheeled my table up, plucked one of the white roses that clustered outside, and fancied I could smell the sea-air.

'And so,' said I, complacently peeling my peaches, 'this is actually Sterne's room! He once sat beside this casement where I am now seated; looked out into this garden, where—— But who knows? Perhaps the opening scenes of the *Sentimental Journey* were even written in this chamber, and here am I with the book in my pocket. Now, this is really delightful! Yorick'—and I poured out a glass of the amber Johannisberger, and addressed myself to the portrait over the fireplace—'Yorick, your health!'

I took the volume out, and turning the leaves idly, came to the chapters that treat of the *désobligeante*. I was decidedly in a soliloquising mood.

'Now, if I were beginning, instead of ending my journey,' said I, 'there's nothing I should have preferred to the désobligeante. No doubt, there is one to be had somewhere. What if the identical vehicle be still in the stables! That's nonsense, of course; and yet, I should just like to make the inquiry. Yorick, your health again, and let me tell you, sir, that it's not every man who, fifty years after his decease, gets toasted in wine at seventeen francs the bottle!'

There was a tap at my door.

'A thousand pardons,' observed the waiter, looking in. 'Monsieur is alone?'

'Go to the mischief!' said I savagely. Fortunately it was in English, so he did not understand me.

'There are two gentlemen here, monsieur—two milords, your countrymen, who desire particularly to be permitted to see this apartment for a moment.'

'"An Englishman does not travel to see Englishmen,"' I muttered to myself, quoting page nineteen of the *Sentimental Journey*.

'Am I honoured with monsieur's permission to shew them up?'

I was forced to say yes—not very graciously, I fear; and he ushered them in accordingly.

The first was a spare, eager-looking man, with keen quivering nostrils, and a brow furrowed with thought and expressive of immense determination of character. The appearance of the second was still more remarkable. I could not remove my eyes from his face, and yet I could scarcely have told you what it was that so attracted me. His forehead was broad and high; his mouth open and eloquent; his hair black, glossy, and falling in smooth pendulous masses almost to his shoulders. His eyebrows were prominent and bushy, and the eyes beneath them animated by a living radiance, alternately dreamy and tender, wild and energetic. I have since heard them compared to 'the rolling of a sea with darkened lustre,' and I can think of no words which better express their changefulness and their depth.

He entered last, but stepped before his friend, and stood looking up at the portrait. The other bowed and apologised to me in a few brief hesitating words for their intrusion.

Presently the second comer turned round, and without any previous recognition of my presence, said:

'I see that you two have been dining together. Has the worthy prebend been an agreeable companion?'

The oddity of the address pleased me.

'I cannot say that I have wanted for amusement,' I replied smiling, 'since the *Sentimental Journey* has been lying beside my plate all the time. Will you be seated?'

He needed no second invitation, but dropped indolently into an easy-chair, and lay back with his eyes still fixed on the picture; while his companion walked over to the window, and stood there, looking out, with a fidgety uneasy countenance, as if he had seen quite enough of the room, and was more anxious to go than stay.

'I do not admire the *Sentimental Journey*,' said he in the easy-chair. 'It is poor sickly stuff; and the oftener you read Sterne, the more clearly will you perceive its inferiority to *Tristram Shandy*. There is truth and reality in the one, and little beyond a clever affectation in the other. But Sterne's morals were bad. His heart was bad; his life was bad. He dallied with vice, and called it sentiment, or combined it with wit, drollery, and fancy, and served it up for the amusement of the fashionable world, whose idol he was. His mind oscillated ever on the confines of evil, and from this dangerous element he drew his "effects," his clap-trap, and his false whimpering sensibility. There is not a page of Sterne's writings undefiled by some hint of impurity; and yet he approaches the subject with a mixture of courage and cowardice, as a man snuffs a candle with his fingers for the first time; or, better still, like that trembling daring with which a child touches a hot tea-urn—only because it has been forbidden. He is a hypocrite, because he affects to be the ally of virtue, and entertains all the while a secret sympathy with the enemy. At the same time, I don't think his hypocrisy can do much harm, or his morals either, unless to those who are already vicious.'

The gentleman at the window faced round, and shook his head.

'You are seldom just to authors for whom you have no liking,' he said in harsh quick tones; 'and it seems to me that in this instance you jump too hastily at conclusions. It does not follow that a man is a hypocrite because his actions give the lie to his words. If he at one time seems to be a saint, and at another a sinner, he possibly is both in reality, as well as in appearance. A person may be fond of vice and of virtue too, and practise one or the other according to the temptation of the moment: a priest may be pious, and at the same time a sot or a bigot; a woman may be modest, and a rake at heart; a poet may admire the beauties of nature, and be envious of those of other writers; a moralist may act contrary to his own precepts, and yet be sincere in recommending them to others. These are indeed contradictions, but they arise out of the contradictory qualities of our nature. A man is a hypocrite only when he affects to take delight in what he does not feel, and not because he takes a perverse delight in opposite things.'

'An admirable piece of metaphysical defence,' said the other, whom, for the sake of distinction, I shall call the philosopher; 'but one that, after all, does not go far to prove your case. Remember Sterne's neglect of his loving wife, and the heartlessness of his flirtations, and then judge how sincere may have been those tears which he snivelled so plenteously over a dead donkey at Nampont. Pshaw! 'tis the very mockery of virtue!'

'And a compliment to it at the same time,' retorted the metaphysician. 'Come, you are severe to-day, and misjudge him from an excess of manner here and there. The profoundest wisdom is sometimes combined in his pages with an outward appearance of levity; and many passages which have to bear the charge of coarseness, contain, nevertheless, a sterling view of love and charity. Think of Uncle Toby!'

'Who pitied even the devil!' said the philosopher, extending his hand indolently for the bottle of Johannisberger which I had just pushed towards him.

'Who is one of the finest tributes ever paid to human nature!' exclaimed his friend. 'Why, this I will say, that Shakspeare himself never conceived a character so genial, so delicious, so unoffending! Then, again, turn to the story of Le Fevre: it is perhaps the finest in the English language. I cannot conceive how Goldsmith could call Sterne "a dull fellow." The author of the *Vicar* should have known better.'

'Perhaps,' said I, venturing for the first time to mingle with their conversation, 'the tone of Goldsmith's mind was too thoroughly English to appreciate the glancing transitions, the poignant though artificial wit, and the extraordinary variableness of Sterne. It has always appeared to me that, although his style was so racy, so rapid, so idiomatically English, his genius and disposition inclined more towards the characteristics of the French writers.'

'You mean Rabelais,' said the philosopher; 'and Rabelais he was, only born in a happier age, and gifted with sentiment.'

'I was not alluding particularly to Rabelais,' I rejoined. 'I believe I was thinking more of the modern French school—of the Balzacs, Karrs, and Paul de Kocks, who can scarcely be supposed to have imitated a half-forgotten English writer of the last century.' Both of my visitors looked interested, and I went on. 'It is in his abrupt variations of feeling that this resemblance forces itself upon me. I find in the writers I have named, and in fifty others who are their pupils and contemporaries, the same antithetical propensity which delights in giving a comic turn to a serious passage—the same implied satire and half-expressed double-entendres—the same unfinished sentences, and the same hysterical mingling of smiles and tears. Compare, for instance, *Tristram Shandy* and *L'Amoureux Franci.* A Hindoo would swear that the soul of Laurence Sterne had taken up its present abode in the body of Paul de Kock. Again, let us consider his power of turning trifles to account, and evolving from the least promising incidents the most exquisite combinations of feeling and fancy. Apropos of a pin, he fills a page with wisdom on humanities; and from his barber's recommendation of a wig-buckle, deduces an admirable analysis of the French national character. Is not this one of the leading traits of modern French authorship? Place in the way of one of these witty and imaginative *feuilletonists* the most barren and uninteresting of objects, and he will enrich it with all the embroideries of art, clothe it in the rainbow hues of his own fancy, and, though it were but an old pair of ruffles or a market-barrow, end by making you laugh or cry according to his pleasure. In this manner, an ingenious French writer has elaborated a charming volume on no more extensive a subject than a journey round his room; and from so simple an incident as a flower springing up accidentally within the confines of a prison, another has contributed to our modern European literature the most touching, the most humanising, the most philosophical of moral stories.

Thus, in his gaiety and his gravity alike, in his treatment of minutiæ and his natural temperament, I find myself irresistibly reminded of the French style whenever I open a volume of Sterne. Do you follow me?'

'Perfectly,' replied the philosopher; 'and I admit the justice of your remarks. He has all the volatility, as well as all the seriousness of the French character—that seriousness which he was the first as well as the last traveller to discern. "If the French have a fault, Monsieur le Comte," he says in the chapters on the passport, "it is that they are too serious."'

The metaphysician smiled. 'Not the last traveller,' he said; 'for in those notes that I made on my late journey through France and Italy, I particularly observed this exception to their generally fluttering and thoughtless disposition. These last are the qualities that strike us most by contrast to ourselves, and that come most into play in the intercourse of common life; and therefore we are generally disposed to set them down as an altogether frivolous and superficial people. It is a mistake which we shall do well to correct on further acquaintance with them; or, if we persist in it, we must call to our aid an extraordinary degree of our native blindness and obstinacy. Why, the expression of a Frenchman's face is often as melancholy when he is by himself as it is lively in conversation. The instant he ceases to talk, he becomes "quite chop-fallen."'

'It is strange,' observed the philosopher, 'how little this contradiction in their character has been noticed. They have never had the credit of it, though it stares one in the face everywhere. You can't go into one of their theatres without being struck by the silence and decorum that reign throughout the audience, from the scholar in the stalls to the workman in the galleries.'

'This results in part, perhaps, from their studious inclinations,' said the other. 'The French are fond of reading as well as of talking. You may constantly see girls tending an apple-stall in the coldest day in winter, and reading Voltaire or Racine. Such a thing was never known in London as a barrow-woman reading Shakspeare. Yet we talk of our wide-spread civilisation and ample provisions for the education of the poor!'

'To be read thus by the lowliest as well as the loftiest, should be the highest ambition of the poet,' exclaimed the philosopher enthusiastically. 'Do you not remember, William, during that pedestrian excursion which you, Wordsworth, John Chester, and I once made from Nether Stowey to Linton, we stayed at an old-fashioned inn near the Valley of Rocks, breakfasted deliciously on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, and found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons* lying in the window-seat? I took it up, and with a feeling that I cannot describe to you, exclaimed aloud: "*That* is true fame!"'

'Yes,' replied the metaphysician with a sigh; 'I remember it perfectly. I was but a lad at the time, and I listened as if in a dream to every syllable that fell from the lips of either Wordsworth or yourself. Fame, thought I, with a sinking heart—alas! to me it is but a word: I shall never possess it; yet will I never cease to worship and to pursue it. At that time, I thought to be a painter; and while I lost myself in admiration of a fairy Claude, or hung enraptured over a Titian dark with beauty, I despaired of the perfection I worshipped. And I was right: I should never have made a painter.'

His friend smiled, and shook his head. 'And yet,' said he, 'you are content, I should think, with the share of renown that has fallen to your lot. Do you still hold that fame is but a word?'

'I hold it to be a glorious reality,' replied the metaphysician; 'but one which, least of all others, should be defaced by the petty considerations of our worldly vanities and selfish personalities. Fame is the inheritance not of the dead, but of the living. It is we who look back with lofty pride to the great names of antiquity—who drink of that flood of glory as of a river, and refresh our wings in it for future flight. Fame, to my thinking, means Shakspeare, Homer, Bacon, Raphael. Fame can attach itself only to the past. Reputation is the property of the present.'

'A subtile distinction,' said the philosopher, emptying the last glass of my Johannisberger; 'but one which'——

The door of the chamber opened.

'Your carriage, gentlemen, is ready,' said the waiter.

We all rose simultaneously.

'I am sure,' said the philosopher, with an air of high-bred courtesy—'I am sure we must have fatigued and interrupted you, sir, in a most unpardonable manner. I am ashamed'—and here he glanced regretfully towards the empty bottle and the comfortable *fauteuil*—'to have intruded so long upon your patience and your hospitality; but if you should ever chance to wander in the neighbourhood of Nether Stowey, Somersetshire, I will endeavour to atone for my present thoughtlessness, by making you acquainted with our green and hilly country, and our wild seashore. Do not suppose that I say this through a forced politeness. I invite few visitors, and those whom I do ask, I welcome heartily. I am but a hermit in a cottage, however, and cannot promise to give you such vintages as this!'

He took a card from his waistcoat pocket, and advancing with an undulating step, laid it down beside me on the table.

'Samuel Taylor Coleridge!' I exclaimed involuntarily, as my eyes fell on the superscription.

The philosopher extended his hand to me.

'You will not forget to come and see me,' he said, 'if you visit my county; and I trust you will forgive me for introducing myself. It is a bad habit that one acquires abroad—above all, when one meets a fellow-Englishman.'

'I consider,' said I, 'that I am indebted to Yorick for this piece of good-fortune;' and I pointed to the portrait over the mantel-piece.

Coleridge plucked his companion by the sleeve. 'Come, Hazlitt,' he said, 'we have no time to lose.'

'How!' I exclaimed—'is it possible that—that your friend is'——

'William Hazlitt,' replied the poet, making the metaphysician known to me with a serio-comic gesture—'William Hazlitt, the dreaded critic—the redoubtable reviewer—the terrible essayist!'

I endeavoured to stammer out something appropriate as they took leave of me; but at that time I was little used to society, and I believe I had never seen a real live author in my life before, so I fear I was not very successful.

Coleridge hurried his friend from the room, and went out last. Just as he reached the door he turned back.

'Have you read my translation of *The Visit of the Gods*?'

I replied eagerly in the affirmative.

'Then you will remember the opening lines,' he said gaily:

'Never, believe me,
Appear the Immortals,
Never alone!'

The door closed directly, and he was gone. Then I heard his genial laugh upon the stairs, and presently the rattling of the wheels that bore them away. I never visited Nether Stowey, and I never saw either of my guests again. Both have since passed away, and left only their fame and their undying thoughts behind them; but I shall never forget that brief acquaintanceship which began and ended one autumnal afternoon in Sterne's Room, at the Hôtel Dessin.

A NEW BRIGADE.

What are we to do with our ticket-of-leave men? To hang them, or reform them? That is the question that might with propriety occupy the attention of some modern Hamlet: whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune—in the shape of handkerchiefs and life-preservers—or to take arms against a sea of troubles—namely, burglary, garotting, and murder, and, by opposing, end them.

One party indignantly asserts, that having been taken prisoners in the act of making war on society, they are entitled to no quarter, and should be strung up without mercy; the other mildly argues, that they should be let out on parole, and the honour that is proverbially known to exist among thieves, taken as a moral guarantee for their better behaviour. The former would treat them as vermin, and crush them with a strong hand once and for ever; the latter would train them up to useful occupations, as the industrious fleas were taught to go in harness and draw carriages.

Neither plan meets with my approbation. I may occasionally, when speaking of these pests of society, exclaim in a mild ejaculatory tone: 'Hang 'em!' but I am not by any means an advocate for their wholesale extermination. Neither do I overflow with the milk of human kindness to such a ridiculous extent as to say: 'Let them go free, and trust to human nature and the tracts they have read while in prison to prevent them falling into their evil courses again.' I believe that the greater part of them can no more keep from thieving than a cat can keep from cream. They have served their apprenticeship to crime, and can get their livelihood in no other way. They recur as naturally to *their* profession on getting out of prison, as a doctor would to *his*, supposing that the practice of physic were made an indictable offence, which in some instances it certainly should be. No, no; hanging and reformation are not to be thought of: one is impracticable—the other impossible. Transportation I am equally averse to. I have a plan of my own that settles the question at once. I am the Œdipus of the nineteenth century, that has solved this great political enigma. With one stroke, as it were, of my feathered sword do I sever the Gordian-knot of modern civilisation. Thus—Use them!

Collect all the ticket-of-leave men now at large into one body, and, instead of allowing them to exercise their ingenuity on ourselves, let them devote their acknowledged skill and talents to the molestation of our enemies. They are formidable enough in twos and threes, as we know to our cost; but what a tremendous engine of destruction should we possess, if all the licensed ruffians now prowling about England were concentrated into one large force! It would be an infernal machine, scattering devastation among all those that had the ill-luck to be opposed to it. On a campaign, the services of such a body would be invaluable. What short work a gang of London housebreakers would have made of Sebastopol, and what a magnificent burglary it would have been! How silently and effectually a company of garotteers would clear away a chain of advanced outposts! A sentry with a pitch-plaster on his mouth would be as helpless as a turtle on his back, and a charge made by a body of men armed with sponges full of chloroform, would be perfectly irresistible. Only imagine the annoyance that would be caused to an enemy by a select band of experienced thieves. They would literally steal into his camp, and carry off everything they could lay their hands on. It is evident that an army deprived of their cooking-utensils, must surrender at discretion.

But it is impossible, in my limited space, to enumerate the manifold advantages of such a plan. It is a noble idea. It occurred to me while reading the naval and military intelligence contained in the columns of the *Times*. It appears that a number of ticket-of-leave men have enlisted in the Royal Artillery, and that the monotony of barrack-life at Woolwich is occasionally relieved by the daring exploits of these prison-heroes. It is not likely that the artillery is the only regiment thus honoured. Doubtless, large numbers are distributed throughout the whole army. This, in my opinion, is a mistake that should at once be remedied. Artists skilled in the use of skeleton-keys and jemmies will find a Minié-rifle but an awkward implement; and the beauties of the manual and platoon exercise will fail to be appreciated by hands accustomed to the more delicate manipulations required for picking pockets.

Now, to let my plan more fully develop itself. Let these ingenious warriors be taken from a sphere where their talents are not properly estimated—some of the poor fellows have even been flogged at Woolwich—and formed into a separate service. This force, into which all the ticket-of-leave men now following their professional avocations in London and the provinces should be draughted, might be organised like the regular army, and called the Brigade of Black-guards. This, again, could be subdivided into regiments of Ruffians, of various classes and denominations. Thus, we might have the Royal Riflers, the Smashers, the Dirty Half-hundred, the Roughs; and so on. As in the regulars, there is a company of grenadiers and light infantry attached to each regiment, so, in the irregulars, every corps might possess its garotteers and light-fingered company. National regiments might easily be formed, such as the Irish Black-guards, or the Connaught Stranglers; others might be called after the places where they were raised, for instance, the Notting Hill Burglars, the Petticoat Lane Pickpockets, &c. In the line, regiments occasionally bear the name of some distinguished soldier: the 33d is the Duke of Wellington's Regiment; the 18th is Prince Albert's Own Light Infantry: in the Black-guard Brigade, Jack Sheppard and other celebrities in the Newgate calendar might be similarly honoured. Instead of Sappers and Miners, a body of Pickers and Stealers could be formed; and any members of the Brigade who have been convicted of receiving stolen goods, might with propriety be converted into Fencibles. A corps of marines would, of course, comprise all those whose offence has been mutiny, piracy, and crimes committed on board ship. The days of highwaymen are unfortunately gone by, or a body of cavalry might have been attached to the force, and called the Mounted Riflemen, or Dick Turpin's Own Light Dragoons. The civil department of the service can be administered by members of the swell mob; while the duties of orderly-room clerks, and the office-work generally, will naturally fall to the share of fraudulent bankers and dishonest officials of every description.

The uniform of the Brigade might consist of the elegant gray-cloth suit and muffin-cap peculiar to the inmates of our hulks and dock-yards; and, as a further mark of distinction, the men might be permitted to wear the *recherché* style of *coiffure* fashionable in the various prisons and houses of correction throughout the kingdom. Instead of such devices as lions, tigers, and white horses of Hanover, common in the regular service, each corps of the brigade might wear, as a regimental badge, a magpie, fox, vulture, or other dishonest and rapacious animal; and such mottoes as 'Astutiâ non animo, Toujours arrière, Humani nihil alienum, Malo fœdari quam mori,' would be both classical and appropriate. If colours were permitted, those of the

Petticoat Lane regiment might consist of a pair of handsome silk pocket-handkerchiefs. At parades and inspections, each man, instead of the 'small book' shewn in the line, would be expected to produce his ticket-of-leave. Every branch of the service would of course be armed in the way best suited for the display of its peculiar gifts: thus, the Garotteers would be provided with the customary handkerchief and life-preserver; and the battalion of Burglars with crowbars, files, and the various other implements necessary for their particular vocation. Chloroform would be served out to those who have been in the habit of stupifying their victim before proceeding to business; but the Riflers, and Pickers, and Stealers would be naturally expected to find their own arms. The Brigade might be encamped upon Bagshot Heath, which, from old associations, is eminently fitted for the purpose. Should any gibbets still remain in that renowned locality, so much the better; they will be pleasing mementoes of departed heroes, who, had they lived in these days, would have done honour to the force which I hope shortly to see incorporated.

I have merely given the outline of the magnificent design; the details can be arranged hereafter. Like all great reforms, the plan will doubtless have its opponents; but I feel convinced mine is the only practical solution of the great question of the day. If we are tired of being knocked on the head in our parks, choked in our streets, murdered in our houses, and robbed everywhere, the remedy is in our own hands—all we have to do is to organise the Black-guard Brigade.

[There are some little matters in this jeu d'esprit not altogether to the taste of the *Journal;* but we may perhaps take our revenge upon our eccentric friend by treating more gravely at another time the position of the unfortunates he makes the butt of his humour.—Ed.]

NATURAL HISTORY OF MY POND.

IN TWO PARTS.—CONCLUSION.

The next creature we must notice is a blood-sucker upon rather a larger scale, though he operates for the common good; and although no one is proud of his acquaintance, there are few of us who have not at times profited by his kind offices. This friend is the leech (*Hirudo medicinalis*). He is common in the pond, and is really, prejudice apart, a handsome-looking fellow: his back is olive-green, with long red stripes, and his under-surface is yellow, thickly spotted with black. If he is rather a hungry being, and too fond of crying 'Give, give,' he still works for weal, and not for wo. All honour, therefore, to the leech; he is under my special protection. Not so, however, the less organised beings which are nearly allied to him; they are *uncanny*, and are the cause of more mischief than we perhaps know. The commonest of these Planariæ, for so we must term them—(their specific name is unknown to me)—is a small black species, abundant on the leaves of the water-lily, apparently a vegetable feeder, and always herding together in great numbers. But there is another kind, far more elegant, though not quite so plentiful; much larger; of an ovate instead of a linear form, and with a beautifully crenated margin. It is of a white colour, delicately shaded with gray. This may often be drawn to shore with the water-plants. These are beings to be regarded with suspicion: the metamorphoses they undergo are strange, and as yet imperfectly understood; and if they are innocent, yet their first-cousins, the Distomata, can be proved to be guilty enough, causing the disease in sheep known by the name of the rot: a disease which sometimes attacks man also. There is another being in My Pond whose character is no whit better—a long thread-like worm (*Gordius aquaticus*), often several inches long, curiously coiled up, yet not thicker than a cotton thread. He is not in his perfect state; he means mischief; and is, depend upon it, only an evil spirit in disguise.

The only remaining articulate animals to be mentioned are the pretty little wheel-animalcules; and to make their acquaintance we must call in the aid of the microscope. The little group are, however, quite worth the trouble. The curious wheels with which their mouths are furnished have gained them their name, *Rotifera.* These wheels are often to be seen in full action; the cilia or fringe of minute lashes on them being at such a time in constant motion. The little being then fixes itself firmly to some small stalk or leaf of an aquatic plant, and by the aid of the current so set up, its food is procured. Below this wheel-apparatus is a powerful armament of teeth, arranged so as to look like a cross. The commonest of these is called *Rotifer vulgaris;* but there are many kinds in the pond. They are, for the most part, just visible to the naked eye, but cannot be seen properly without the microscope. The play of the wheels is most curious, and well worthy of notice. At the will of the animal, however, the wheels can be withdrawn, and the little being can crawl along, first fixing the hinder extremity, then bending its body after the manner of a geometric or looping caterpillar, and fixing the upper, or head—then making this the fulcrum, and proceeding as before. This little being is the last to be mentioned of the articulata, though its curious apparatus of wheels make it not the least interesting.

From the jointed or articulate animals, we pass to the mollusks; and of these, by far the most numerous section in the pond are those which resemble the snail in shape and structure. They have a distinct head, and a large foot on the lower surface of the body, by which they walk along the plants on whose leaves they feed. They are water-snails, and there are several species; there is one with the whorls arranged in a perfectly flat coil, like a 'Catherine's wheel,' and from this it has its name, *planorbis.* Of this genus there are two or three species on the pond, as indeed there are also of the next group, or true water-snails, where the spiral is, as it were, drawn out, so as to form a cone. Of these shells, there is one, more than an inch in length, of a brown colour, and very pointed at the apex (*Lymnæus stagnalis*); it is abundant on the leaves of the pond-weed. There is also a lesser species (*L. pereger*), about a quarter the size, and which is rather found along the banks and amongst the water-grasses which fringe the pool; both, however, are plentiful. If these are examined, it will be seen that they all breathe by a large sac, just as the snail does, serving them for a lung; they breathe, therefore, through the agency of the air. There is, however, another shell in My Pond, of a less conical form, and wider in proportion to its length, with an indistinct spiral band winding round the shell. This species (*Paludina vivipara*) breathes through the means of the oxygen dissolved in the water, as many creatures previously examined by us have also done; the breathing is therefore by branchiæ—that is, a row of comb-like gills, over which the water plays.

Unfortunately, the pond does not contain any of the polype-like mollusks or Bryozoa, as they are termed—that is to my knowledge—and no bivalve shells, so that the stock of this class in my preserve is very small.

Of radiated beings, which gain their name from the star-like form in which their parts are usually arranged—the starfish being the most familiar example—there is only one species in the pond (*Hydra viridis*), the pretty little green fresh-water polype. This is not rare upon the submerged stems of various plants. It is a sea-anemone on a very small scale, with long tentacles, and with a much simpler structure, for it is all stomach.

Eight arms surround the mouth, and these arms are used to seize upon creatures larger even than the polype itself. It is very bold, and does not much seem to care what it attacks; and perhaps it has such power of surviving accidents, that it may brave many dangers with impunity. Cut it in two, you only multiply it; turn it inside out like the finger of a glove, and the animal feels no difference—the skin serves for stomach, and the stomach for skin. It walks nimbly along as the rotifers were previously described to do, and may often be seen with numerous young budding forth from the side, each with its tentacles ready; so that it then presents the spectacle of one animal with many mouths, and all searching for food, all eager for prey. The hydra, though small, is extremely rapacious, and seizes very eagerly all things coming within its grasp: even a brother-hydra is sometimes caught and devoured; but he has the privilege of free entry, and escapes undigested from his apparently perilous abode. The poor water-flea is not so fortunate; he is a frequent prey. There is some power resident in the arms of the hydra by which it can destroy its victim. Once in its fatal grasp, there is no escape; and it has been stated by Trembley, that even a young minnow will sometimes be thus caught and devoured by this walking stomach.

And now, last of all, we come to those earliest forms of life grouped together under the name of animalcules or Protozoa, many of which are almost daily making their way from the animal into the vegetable kingdom. My poor little favourite, the volvox, which rolled about under the microscope in such a regular and marvellous manner, is now degraded into a plant. The pretty Diatomaceæ, with their elegantly sculptured skeletons of flint, are also looked upon as vegetables. The most beautiful of those left to me are those living bells, set like flowers upon long stalks, which twist and writhe about with every passing current. These Vorticellæ, as they are called, are lovely objects under a low power of the microscope, and may be seen with the naked eye, looking like mildew on the stem of one of the water-plants. Sometimes, as we watch them, a bell-shaped head escapes from its stalk, and swims, by means of its cilia, actively about through the water. Perhaps my pretty little sun-shaped animalcule (*Actinophrys sol*) is only one of the stages in the development of this vorticella; but this is yet unproved. There are also to be found that proteus of animalcules whose shape is never fixed, now stretching out one portion of its body as an arm, and now another (*Amova proteus*): there are also plentifully the flask-shaped Eucliesia, and of course hundreds of infusorial animalcules. There is indeed almost sure to be some object of microscopic interest surrounding every decaying fragment of leaf, and in every portion of mud brought from the bottom of the water.

Now we have gone together through the various groups of animal life found in a pond not larger than an ordinary mill-pond; and indeed there are few mill-ponds in the kingdom which would not supply every one of the creatures mentioned, except, perhaps, the water-shrew, which is, however, more frequent than is often thought: nay, more than this, all the invertebrate portion can be kept in one of the bowls used for gold-fish, and will make a very pretty vivarium on a small scale. The plants that should be taken are the *Vallisneria spiralis*, which, though not an English plant, can always be readily procured; the callitriche; or, better still, if it grows in the neighbourhood, the water-violet, *Hottonia palustris*, and a few fronds of the pretty *Lemna trisulca*, the ivy-leaved duck-weed. For the living beings, I would recommend the common stickleback; two or three of the smaller water-beetles, especially those of the genus Colymbetes; some of the larvæ of the dragon-fly; the water-scorpion also, and the Notonecta before mentioned; plenty of the crustaceous animals described here, which will serve not only for amusement, but also for use, as they will supply the larger beings with food; and in addition to these, one or two species of the larger snails, of which the genus Planorbis or Paludina is to be preferred, and some of the smaller kinds of Lymnæus, *L. stagnalis* being rather too voracious for so small an aquarium; then, though last, not least in importance, the *Hydra viridis;* and the experimenter will find more amusement in so small a compass than he could have deemed possible before the trial. One word also of caution: every one making such a collection should avoid the Vorticellæ, for they attach themselves to weakly animals, and cause them to die at all events more quickly than they otherwise would have done. To an inhabitant of London, the additional information may be given, that an afternoon's excursion to Hampstead Heath would supply him with all the species here mentioned.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXII.—CHASED BY A 'GRIZZLY.'

The bear was one of the largest of his kind; but it was not his size that impressed me with fear, so much as the knowledge of his fierce nature. It was not the first time I had encountered the grizzly bear; and I knew his habits well. I was rather surprised at seeing the *Ursus ferox* in that region. The range of this species is more to the west, among the defiles of the Rocky Mountains; but individuals occasionally wander as far east as the meridian of the Mississippi. The one before me was of a yellowish-red colour, with legs and feet nearly black; but colour is no characteristic among these animals, scarcely two of them being alike in this respect. I was familiar with the form and aspect, and could not be mistaken; I recognised the long shaggy pelage, the straight front, and broad facial disk, which distinguishes this species from the *Ursus Americanus*. The yellow eyes, the huge teeth, but half concealed by the lips, and, above all, the long-curving claws—the most prominent marks of the species, as they are his most formidable means of attack—were all identified.

When my eyes first rested upon this monster, he was just emerging out of the barranca at the very spot where I had climbed up myself. It was *his* tracks, then, I had observed while scaling the cliff!

On reaching the level of the prairie, he advanced a pace or two, and then halting, he reared up and stood upon his hind-legs; at the same time he uttered a snorting sound, which resembled the 'blowing' of hogs when suddenly startled in the forest. For some moments he remained in his upright attitude, rubbing his head with his fore-paws, and playing them about after the manner of monkeys. In fact, as he stood fronting me, he looked not unlike a gigantic ape.

When I say that I was terrified by the presence of this unwelcome intruder, I speak no more than truth. Had I been on horseback—on the back of Moro—I should have regarded the creature no more than the snail that crawled upon the grass. The grizzly bear is too slow to overtake a horse; but I was on foot, and well knew that the animal could outrun me, however swift I deemed myself.

To suppose that he would not attack me would have been to suppose an improbability. I did not count upon such a thing; I knew too well the disposition of the enemy that approached. I knew that in nine cases out of ten the grizzly bear is the assailant—that no animal in America will willingly risk a contest with him; and I am not certain that the lion of Africa would wear his laurels after an encounter with this fierce quadruped.

Man himself shuns such an encounter, unless mounted upon the friendly horse; and even then, where the ground is not clear and open, the prudent trapper always gives 'old Ephraim'—the prairie sobriquet of the grizzly—a wide berth, and rides on without molesting him. The white hunter reckons a grizzly bear equal in prowess to two Indians; while the Indian accounts the destruction of one of these animals a great feat in his life's history. Among Indian braves, a necklace of bear's claws is a badge of honour, since these adornments can be worn only by the man who has himself killed the animals from which they are taken.

On the other hand, the grizzly bear fears no adversary; he assails the largest animals on sight. The elk, the moose, the bison, or wild-horse, if caught, is instantly killed. With a blow of his paw, he can lay open the flesh, as if it had been gashed with an axe; and he can drag the body of a full-grown buffalo to any distance. He rushes upon man, whether mounted or on foot; and a dozen hunters have retreated before his furious assault. A dozen bullets—ay, nearly twice that number—have been fired into the body of a grizzly bear without killing him; and only a shot through the brain or the heart will prove instantaneously mortal. Gifted with such tenacity of life and sanguinary fierceness of disposition, no wonder the grizzly bear is a dreaded creature. Were he possessed of the fleetness of the lion or tiger, he would be a more terrible assailant than either; and it is not too much to say that his haunts would be unapproachable by man. He is slow, however, compared with the horse; and there is another circumstance scarcely less favourable to those who pass through his district—he is not a tree-climber. Indeed, he does not affect the forest; but there is usually some timber in the neighbourhood of his haunts; and many a life has been saved by his intended victim having taken refuge in a tree.

I was well acquainted with these points in the natural history of this animal, and you may fancy the feelings I experienced at finding myself in the presence of one of the largest and fiercest upon the naked plain, alone, dismounted, almost unarmed! There was not a bush where I could hide myself, not a tree into which I might climb. There was no means of escape, and almost none of defence; the knife was the only weapon I had with me; my rifle I had left upon the other side of the barranca, and to reach it was out of the question. Even could I have got to the path that led down the cliff, it would have been madness to attempt crossing there; although not a tree-climber, the grizzly bear, by means of his great claws, could have scaled the cliff more expeditiously than I. I should have been caught before I could have reached the bottom of the ravine, had I made the attempt.

The bear was directly in the path. It would have been literally running 'into his arms' to have gone that way.

These reflections occupy minutes of your time to *read;* I *thought* them in less than moments. A single glance around shewed me the utter helplessness of my situation; I saw there was no alternative but a desperate conflict—a conflict with the knife! Despair, that for a moment had unnerved, now had the effect of bracing me; and, fronting my fierce foe, I stood ready to receive him.

I had heard of hunters having conquered and killed the grizzly bear with no other weapon than a knife, but after a terrible and protracted struggle—after many wounds and sore loss of blood. I had read in the book of a naturalist, that 'a man might end a struggle with a bear in a few instants, if one hand be sufficiently at liberty to grasp the throat of the animal with the thumb and fingers externally, *just at the root of the tongue,* as a slight degree of compression there will generally suffice to produce a spasm of the glottis, that will soon suffocate the bear beyond the power of offering resistance or doing injury.' Beautiful theory! Sagacious naturalist! How would you like to try the experiment? Have you ever heard of birds being caught by the application of 'salt to the tail?' The theory is as correct as yours, and I am certain the practice of it would not be more difficult!

But I digress among these after-thoughts. I had no time to reflect upon 'compressions of the tongue' or 'spasms of the glottis.' My antagonist soon finished his reconnaissance of me, and, dropping upon all fours, he uttered a loud roar, and rushed towards me with open mouth.

I had resolved to await his attack; but as he came nearer, and I beheld his great gaunt form, his gleaming teeth, and his senna-coloured eyes flashing like fire, I changed my design; a new thought came suddenly across my mind; I turned and fled.

The thought that prompted me to adopt this course was, that the bear might be attracted by the carcass of the antelope, and pause over it—perhaps long enough to give me a start, or enable me to escape altogether. If not, my situation could be no worse than it then was.

Alas! my hope was short-lived. On reaching the antelope, the fierce monster made no halt. I glanced back; he was already past it, and closing rapidly upon my heels.

I am a swift runner—one of the swiftest. Many a school-day triumph can I remember; but what was my speed against such a competitor! I was only running myself out of breath. I should be less prepared for the desperate conflict that must soon come off; better to turn, and at once face the foe!

I had half resolved—half turned, in fact—when an object flashed before my eyes that dazzled them. Inadvertently, I had run in the direction of the pond; I was now upon its shore. It was the sun gleaming from the water that dazzled me. The surface was calm as a mirror.

A new idea—a sort of half-hope—rushed instantaneously into my mind. It was the straw to the drowning man. The fierce brute was close behind me; another instant, and we must have grappled. Not yet, not yet, thought I. I should fight him in the water—in the deep water: that might give me an advantage. Perhaps, then, the contest would be more equal; perhaps I might escape by diving!

I sprang into the pond without a moment of hesitation. The water was knee-deep. I plunged onward, making for the centre; the spray rose round me; the pond deepened as I advanced; I was soon up to the waist.

I glanced around with anxious heart; the bear was standing upon the edge. To my surprise and joy, I saw that he had halted, and seemed disinclined to follow me.

I say, to my surprise I saw this, for I knew that water has no terrors for the grizzly bear; I knew that he could swim; I had seen many of his kind crossing deep lakes and rapid rivers. What, then, hindered him from following me?

I could not guess, nor, indeed, did I try to guess, at the moment; I thought of nothing but getting further from the shore, and waded on till I had arrived near the centre of the lake and stood neck-deep in the water. I could go no further without swimming, and therefore came to a stand, with my face turned towards my pursuer.

I watched his every movement. He had risen once more upon his hind-quarters, and stood looking after me, but still apparently without any intention of taking to water.

After regarding me for some time, he fell back upon all-fours, and commenced running round the border of the pond, as if searching for a place to enter.

There were not over two hundred paces between us, for the pond was only twice that in diameter. He could soon have reached me, had he felt so disposed; but for some reason or other, he seemed disinclined to a 'swim.' For a full half-hour he kept running back and forwards along the shore.

Besides the apprehension in which his presence held me, my situation was far from comfortable. Although there was a warm sun overhead, the water was as cold as ice, and my teeth began to chatter like castanets. I knew not how long the scene was to last. I well knew the vengeful disposition of the grizzly bear, and the untiring pertinacity with which he follows any one who may have roused his resentment. Fortunately, I had neither wounded nor molested him, and I was in hopes that my innocence in this respect might save me from a very protracted siege. I had no other hope of being rescued from my perilous situation.

He appeared to have made up his mind to wait until I should come out; though once or twice I thought he was about to swim towards me; for he halted upon the very edge, craned his head over the water, oscillating the forepart of his body, as if going to plunge in. After manœuvring in this way for some seconds, he turned his side, and continued to pace along the bank.

What *he* thought of our relative situations, I cannot tell. A third party, in the position of a spectator, would have regarded the tableau as comic in the extreme. Up to my neck in the middle of the pond, with only my head appearing above the water, I must have presented a ludicrous spectacle; and now that I think of it, I cannot help smiling at the figure I must have cut in the eyes of the bear. I did not laugh at it then; I was too badly frightened for that. There was no laughter in me at that hour.

For a long while—full half-an-hour, I should judge—the bear remained near the edge of the pond. Now and again, he made short excursions out into the prairie; but always returned soon, and regarded me afresh, as though determined not to lose sight of me for any length of time. I was in hopes that he might stray round to the other side of the pond, and give me the chance of making a rush for the ravine; but no; he continued on that side where he had first appeared, as though he suspected my design.

I began to despair. I shivered. The pond must have been a spring, so chill were its waters. I shivered, but kept my place; I dared not move out of it. I even feared to agitate the water around me, lest by so doing I might excite my fierce enemy, and tempt his onset. I shivered, but stood still.

My patience was at length rewarded. The bear, making one of his short tours into the prairie, espied the carcass of the antelope. I saw that he had halted over something, though I could not tell what, for my eyes were below the level of the plain. Presently, his head was raised again, and in his jaws were the remains of the prong-horn. To my joy, I now perceived that he was dragging it towards the barranca, and in another minute he had disappeared with it behind the cliff.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TOUGHEST STRUGGLE OF MY LIFE.

I swam a few strokes, and then wading gently and without noise, I stood upon the sandy shore. With shivering frame and dripping garments, I stood, uncertain what course to pursue. I was upon the opposite side of the lake—I mean opposite to where I had entered it. I had chosen that side intentionally, lest the bear should suddenly return. He might deposit the carcass in his lair, and come back to look after me. It is a habit of these animals, when not pressed by immediate hunger, to bury their food or store it in their caves. Even the eating of the antelope would have been an affair of only a few minutes' time. The bear might still return, more fierce that he had tasted blood.

I was filled with irresolution. Should I fly off to the plain beyond the reach of pursuit? I should have to return again for my horse and rifle. To take to the prairie on foot would be like going to sea without a boat; but, even had I been sure of reaching the settlements in safety without my horse, I could not think of such a thing. I loved my Moro too well to leave him behind me: I would have risked life itself rather than part with that noble creature. No; the idea of deserting him was not entertained for a moment.

But how was I to join him? The only path by which I could cross the barranca, had just been taken by the bear. He was no doubt still upon it, in the bottom of the ravine. To attempt passing over, would be to bring myself once more under the eyes of the fierce brute; and I should certainly become his victim.

Another idea suggested itself—to go up the barranca, and find another crossing, or else head it altogether, and come down upon the opposite side. That was clearly the best plan.

I was about starting forward to execute it, when, to my dismay, I again beheld the bear; this time, not upon the same side with myself, but upon the opposite one, where Moro was picketed! He was slowly climbing out of the ravine, and, when I first saw him, was dragging his huge body over the escarpment of the cliff. In a moment, he stood erect upon the open plain.

I was filled with a new consternation; I saw too surely that he was about to attack the horse!

The latter had already observed the bear's approach, and seemed to be fully aware of his danger. I had staked him at the distance of about four hundred yards from the barranca, and upon a lazo of about twenty in length. At sight of the bear, he had run out to the end of his trail-rope, and was snorting and plunging with affright.

This new dilemma arrested me, and I stood with anxious feelings to watch the result. I had no hope of being able to yield the slightest aid to my poor horse—at least none occurred to me at the moment.

The bear made directly towards him, and my heart throbbed wildly as I beheld the fierce brute almost within clawing distance. The horse sprang round, however, and galloped upon a circle of which the lazo was the radius. I knew, from the hard jerks he had already given to the rope, that there was no chance of its yielding and freeing him. No; it was a raw-hide lazo of the toughest thong. I knew its power, and I remembered how firmly I had driven home the picket-pin. This I had now cause to regret. Oh, what would I have given to have been able to draw the blade of my knife across that rope!

I continued to watch the struggle with a painful feeling of suspense. The horse still kept out of reach by galloping round the circumference of the circle, while the bear made his attacks by crossing its chords, or running in circles of lesser diameter. The whole scene bore a resemblance to an act at the Hippodrome, Moro being the steed, and the bear taking the part of the ring-master!

Once or twice, the rope circling round, and quite taut, caught upon the legs of the bear, and, after carrying him along with it for some distance, flung him over upon his back. This seemed to add to his rage, as, after rising each time, he ran after the horse with redoubled fury. I could have been amused at the singular spectacle, but that my mind was too painfully agitated about the result.

The scene continued for some minutes without much change in the relative position of the actors. I began to hope that the brute might be baffled after all, and finding the horse too nimble for him, would give over his attempts, particularly as I had noticed the latter administer several kicks that might have discomfited any other assailant; but these only rendered the bear more savage and vengeful.

Just at this time the scene assumed a new phase, likely to bring about the *dénouement*. The rope had once more pressed against the bear; but this time, instead of trying to avoid it, he seized it in his teeth and paws. I thought at first he was going to cut it, and this was exactly what I wished for; but no—to my consternation I saw that he was crawling along it by constantly renewing his hold, and thus gradually and surely drawing nearer to his victim! The horse now screamed with terror!

I could bear the sight no longer. I remembered that I had left my rifle near the edge of the barranca, and some distance from the horse; I remembered, too, that after shooting the antelope, I had carefully reloaded it. I ran forward to the cliff, and dashed madly down its face; I climbed the opposite steep, and clutching the gun, rushed towards the scene of strife.

I was still in time; the bear had not yet reached his victim, though now within less than six feet of him.

I advanced within ten paces, and fired. As though my shot had cut the thong, it gave way at the moment, and the horse with a wild neigh sprang off into the prairie!

I had hit the bear, as I afterwards ascertained, but not in a vital part, and my bullet had no more effect upon him than if it had been a drop of snipe-shot. It was the strength of despair that had broken the rope, and set free the steed.

It was my turn now, for the bear, as soon as he perceived that the horse had escaped him, turned and sprang upon me, uttering, as he did so, a loud cry. I had no choice but fight. I had no time to reload. I struck the brute once with my clubbed rifle, and flinging the gun away, grasped the readier knife. With the strong keen blade—the knife was a bowie—I struck out before me; but the next moment, I felt myself grappled and held fast. The sharp claws tore up my flesh; one paw was griped over my hips, another rested on my shoulder, while the white teeth gleamed before my eyes. My knife-arm was free; I had watched this when grappling, and with all the energy of despair, I plunged the keen blade between the ribs of my antagonist. I sought for the heart at every stab.

We rolled together to the ground, over and over again. The red blood covered us both. I saw it welling from the lips of the fierce monster, and I joyed to think that my knife reached his vitals. I was wild—I was mad—I was burning with a fierce vengeance—with anger, such as one might feel for a human foe!

Over and over the ground in the fierce struggle of life and death. Again I feel the terrible claws, the tearing teeth; again goes my blade up to the hilt. Gracious powers! how many lives has he? Will he never yield to the red steel? See the blood!—rivers of blood—the prairie is red—we roll in blood. I am sick at the sight—sick—I faint——

CHAPTER XXIV.

OLD COMRADES.

I fancied myself in a future world, battling with some fearful demon. No; those forms I see around me are of the earth. I still live!

My wounds pain me. Some one is binding them up. His hand is rude; but the tender expression of his eye tells me that his heart is kind. Who is he? Whence came he?

I am still upon the wide prairie; I see that clearly enough. Where is my terrible antagonist? I remember our fierce fight—everything that occurred; but—*I thought he had killed me!*

I certainly *was* dead. But no; it cannot have been. I still live!

I see above me the blue sky—around me the green plain. Near me are forms—the forms of men, and yonder I see horses!

Into whose hands have I fallen? Whoever they be, they are friends; they must have rescued me from the gripe of the monster. But how? No one was in sight: how could they have arrived in time? I would ask, but have not strength.

The men are still bending over me. I observe one with large beard and brown bushy whiskers. There is another face, old and thin, and tanned to a copper colour. My eyes wander from one to the other; some distant recollections stir within me. Those faces—— Now I see them but dimly—I see them no longer——

I had fainted, and was again insensible. Once more I became conscious, and this time felt stronger: I could better understand what was passing around me. I observed that the sun was going down; but a buffalo robe, suspended upon two upright saplings, guarded his rays from the spot where I lay. My serapé was under me, and my head rested in my saddle, over which another robe had been laid. I lay upon my side, and the position gave me a commanding view of all that was passing. A fire was burning near, by which were two persons, one seated, the other standing; my eyes passed from one to the other, scanning each in turn.

The younger stood leaning on his rifle, looking into the fire. He was the type of a "mountain man," a trapper. He was full six feet in his moccasins, and of a build that suggested the idea of strength and Saxon ancestry. His arms were like young oaks; and his hand grasping the muzzle of his gun, appeared large, fleshless, and muscular. His cheek was broad and firm, and was partially covered with a bushy whisker, that met over the chin; while a beard of the same colour—dull brown—fringed the lips. The eye was gray, or bluish gray, small, well-set, and rarely wandering. The hair was light brown; and the complexion of the face, which had evidently once been blonde, was now nearly as dark as that of a half-breed. Sun-tan had produced this metamorphosis. The countenance was prepossessing: it might have been once handsome. Its expression was bold, but good-humoured, and bespoke a kind and generous nature.

The dress of this individual was the well-known costume of his class—a hunting-shirt of dressed deer-skin, smoked to the softness of a glove; leggings reaching to the hips, and fringed down the seams; moccasins of true Indian make, soled with buffalo hide (*parflêche*). The hunting-shirt was belted around the waist, but open above, so as to leave the throat and part of the breast uncovered; but over the breast could be seen the under-shirt, of finer material—the dressed skin of the young antelope, or the fawn of the fallow-deer. A short cape, part of the hunting-shirt, hung gracefully over the shoulders, ending in a deep fringe cut out of the buckskin itself. A similar fringe embellished the draping of the skirt. On the head was a racoon-cap—the face of the animal over the front, while the barred tail, like a plume, fell drooping over the left shoulder.

The accoutrements were a bullet-pouch, made from the undressed skin of a tiger-cat, ornamented with the head of the beautiful summer-duck. This hung under the right arm, suspended by a shoulder-strap; and attached, in a similar manner, was a huge crescent-shaped horn, upon which was carved many a strange souvenir. His arms consisted of a knife and pistol—both stuck in the waist-belt—and a long rifle, so straight that the line of the barrel seemed scarcely to deflect from that of the butt.

But little attention had been paid to ornament in either his dress, arms, or equipments; and yet there was a gracefulness in the hang of his tunic-like shirt, a stylishness about the fringing and bead-embroidery, and an air of jauntiness in the set of the 'coon-skin cap, that shewed the wearer was not altogether unmindful of his personal appearance. A small pouch or case, ornamented with stained porcupine quills, hung down upon his breast. This was the pipe-holder—no doubt a *gage d'amour* from some dark-eyed, dark-skinned damsel, like himself a denizen of the wilderness.

His companion was very different in appearance; unlike him—in almost every respect unlike anybody I had ever seen.

The whole appearance of this individual was odd and striking. He was seated on the opposite side of the fire, with his face partially turned towards me, and his head sunk down between a pair of long lank thighs. He looked more like the stump of a tree dressed in dirt-coloured buckskin than a human being; and had his arms not been in motion, he might have been mistaken for such an object. Both his arms and jaws were moving; the latter engaged in polishing a rib of meat which he had half roasted over the coals.

His dress—if dress it could be called—was simple as it was savage. It consisted of what might have once been a hunting-shirt, but which now looked more like a leathern bag with the bottom ripped open, and sleeves sewed into the sides. It was of a dirty-brown colour, wrinkled at the hollow of the arms, patched round the armpits, and greasy all over; it was fairly "caked" with dirt; there was no attempt at either ornament or fringe. There had been a cape, but this had evidently been drawn upon from time to time, for patches and other uses, until scarcely a vestige of it remained. The leggings and moccasins were on a par with the shirt, and seemed to have been manufactured out of the same hide. They, too, were dirt-brown, patched, wrinkled, and greasy. They did not meet each other, but left a piece of ankle bare, and that also was dirt-brown like the buckskin. There was no under-shirt, vest, or other garment to be seen, with the exception of a close-fitting cap, which had once been catskin; but the hair was all worn off, leaving a greasy, leathery-looking surface, that corresponded well with the other parts of the dress. Cap, shirt, leggings, and moccasins, looked as if they had never been stripped off since the day they were first tried on, and that might have been many a year ago. The shirt was open, displaying the naked breast and throat, and these, as well as the face, hands, and ankles, had been tanned by the sun and smoked by the fire to the hue of rusty copper. The whole man, clothes and all, looked as if he had been smoked on purpose.

His face bespoke a man of sixty, or thereabout; his features were sharp, and somewhat aquiline; and the small eyes were dark, quick, and piercing. His hair was black, and cut short; his complexion had been naturally brunette, though there was nothing of the Frenchman or Spaniard in his physiognomy. He was more likely of the black-Saxon breed.

As I looked at this man, I saw that there was a strangeness about him, independently of the oddness of his attire. There was something peculiar about his head—something *wanting*.

What was it that was wanting? It was his ears!

There is something awful in a man without his ears. It suggests some horrid drama—some terrible scene of cruel vengeance: it suggests the idea of crime committed and punishment inflicted.'

I might have had such horrid imaginings, but that I chanced to know why those ears were wanting. I remembered the man who was sitting before me!

It seemed a dream, or, rather, the re-enactment of an old scene. Years before, I had seen that individual, and for the first time, in a situation very similar. My eyes first rested upon him, seated as he was now, over a fire, roasting and eating. The attitude was the same; the *tout ensemble* in no respect different. There was the same greasy catskin-cap, the same scant leggings, the same brown buckskin covering over the lanky frame. Perhaps neither shirt nor leggings had been taken off since I last saw them. They appeared no dirtier, however; that was not possible. Nor was it possible, having once looked upon the wearer, ever to forget him. I remembered him at a glance—Reuben Rawlings, or 'Old Rube,' as he was more commonly called, one of the most celebrated of trappers. The younger man was 'Bill Garey,' another celebrity of the same profession, and old Rube's partner and constant companion.

My heart gladdened at the sight of these old acquaintances. I now knew I was with friends.

I was about to call out to them, when my eye wandering beyond, rested upon the group of horses, and what I saw startled me from my recumbent position. There was Rube's old, blind, bare-ribbed, high-boned, long-eared mare-mustang. Her lank grizzled body, naked tail, and mulish look, I remembered well. There, too, was the large powerful horse of Garey, and there was my own steed Moro picketed beside them! This was a joyful surprise to me, as he had galloped off after his escape from the bear, and I had felt anxious about recovering him; but it was not the sight of Moro that caused me to start with astonishment; it was at seeing another well-remembered animal—another horse. Was I mistaken? Was it an illusion? Were my eyes or my fancy again mocking me? No! It was a reality. There was the noble form, the graceful and symmetrical outlines, the smooth coat of silver white, the flowing tail, the upright jetty ears—all were before my eyes. It was he. *It was the white steed of the prairies!*

MORTALITY.

'And we shall be changed.'

Ye dainty mosses, lichens gray,
Laid cheek on cheek in tender fold,
Each with a soft smile day by day
Returning to the mould;

Brown leaves, that with aërial grace
Slip from the branch like birds a-wing,
Each leaving in the appointed place
Its bud of future spring;

If we, God's sentient creatures, knew
But half your faith in our decay,
We should not tremble as we do
When He calls clay to clay;

But with an equal patience sweet,
We should put off this mortal gear,
In whatsoe'er new form is meet,
Content to reappear;

Knowing each germ of life He gives
Must have in Him its source and rise;
Being that of His being lives
May change, but never dies.

Ye dead leaves, dropping soft and slow,
Ye mosses green, and lichens fair,
Go to your graves, as I will go,
For God is also there.

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MAJOR TRUEFITT ON THE TOO FINE.

REFINEMENT is a very good thing to a certain extent, but it ought not to be carried too far. Human nature we know to be a mixture: besides those intellectual and emotional parts which we cultivate and refine upon, it includes certain animal elements adapted for the rude physical circumstances in which it exists, and serving, indeed, as a needful basis for all the other constituents. In our refining processes, we run a risk of carrying this rough and hardy constituent out of its proper relations; thereby injuring it, making it sickly and silly, and so undermining the whole fabric. I say, then, we should not refine too much.

Let us take a grave analytic view of that pleasant creature of the civilised world—a *lady*. She lives chiefly in a well-furnished house. When she goes abroad, it is in a carriage. She walks little, she has no sort of work that gives exercise to the muscles; the winds of heaven are never allowed to visit her face too roughly. She is consequently a white, soft, slim creature, strikingly different from an average peasant-woman, or a domestic female servant. This elegant being, moreover, insists upon imposing various restraints and obstructions upon her person, with a view to reducing it to a certain ideal which has been conventionally approved of; thus sacrificing to an arbitrary principle of refinement, the healthy play of certain organs essential to the general wellbeing of the system. The consequence is, that she is unfitted for some of the most important functions imposed on her by destiny, breaks down under them, is perhaps cut short in her career, but more probably undergoes a life-long penance of what is called delicate health, useless for any good end in life, and a source of trouble and vexation to all connected with her. I trace all this—and every physiologist will bear me out in the conclusion—to over-refinement upon the material part of our nature. A thing formed roughly to bear a part in a rough process has been taken out of its element, and kept there till its constitutional force was lost. It sinks, of course, under the first shock it encounters. One must pity the unfortunate creature, as she is in a great measure the victim of ignorance and a false system; but I often feel how much condolence is also due to those relatives who have the interesting invalid to take care of, and how much better it would be for herself and others if she had kept nearer the appointed level of human nature, and so escaped a well-known class of evils.

When that sweetly engaging creature, a babe, falls into the keeping of a happy pair, how well it would be for both parties if the parents would rightly consider what it is! Do, my dear friends, remember that it is only human. Angel as it seems, it is only a little animal—an animal with some fine potentialities dormant within it—but in the meantime, simply, frankly, and honestly, a little animal. Now, as such, it has a sphere of being, and calls for being kept in harmony with certain conditions round about it. It has a rough, hardy part to play, and rough, hardy organs to play it with. Let it remain rough and hardy to a fair extent, and so maintain its natural ability to play its appointed part. I believe it would be better for it to be a cottage-child, reared on pottage, and tumbling from morn to eve on a village-green, than a nurse-tended, pampered denizen of a palace, only allowed to take the air at stated hours in a perambulator, or in a brief dull walk. The problem is the simplest imaginable. Keep the creature in all respects on the level of human nature—the healthful average between the physical and the mental parts of our being—and all will be well. Make it too fine, and you lay for it the foundation of unnumbered dangers.

The great bulk of the men who are engaged in the professions and in the higher fields of mercantile life, are little aware of the dangers of their course. Called on to exercise the intellect chiefly, confined to the study and the counting-room, the physical part of their being gets but a restricted play. It has often occurred to me, in conversing with a studious friend, or an assiduous man of business, to ask whether he ever fully considered that there are such things going on in the world as the digging of ditches, the felling of trees, and the holding of ploughs. If they look abroad, they will see that such things are done—that certain men have the strength to do them, and that certain useful ends are thus attained. It appears, in short, that rough labour, vigorous muscular powers, and consequent good to the commonwealth, are all of them coherent parts of the scheme of Providence. Now, there may be individuals better adapted for hard work than others, or it may be convenient to assign the specially hard work to certain persons, while others undertake softer and more refined tasks. But there are no specific differences in human beings to adapt one to one kind of task, and another to another; there are no beings wholly muscle, or wholly brain. There is but one constitution for all, each example of which involves some proportion of every feature common to the rest. The men whose *rôle* it is, then, to use the intellect chiefly, have also a muscular system of some degree of force—not well fitted, perhaps, for ditch-digging, but still a muscular system forming an essential part of their constitution, and requiring to be kept in harmony with the parts of the external world to which it is adapted. They must see to make some use of this clumsy and clogging machine, as they sometimes feel the body to be; otherwise they will have to lay their account with sundry hurtful consequences. If they have no real labour for their arms and their limbs, whereby a useful end may be served, they would do well to take up with some amateur kind, however purposeless. If they dislike digging a garden, let them take to bowling or cricket. Let them at least take rides or walks. Field-sports unfortunately involve an element of inhumanity; yet even field-sports are better than no sports at all. We sometimes wonder at the eagerness of fine gentlemen to get away from their dulcet city-life to a Highland moor or the banks of a Lapland river, there to go through a course of practice attended by most of the hardships of the peasant's lot; but I regard this appetency as in truth the voice of nature proclaiming that man has a physical system which needs exercise, in order that we may be wholly well and happy.

It was perhaps an internal voice of this kind which prompted some of the philosophers of the eighteenth century to propound the startling dogma, that the life of the savage was the only natural and right life. This it certainly is not; but the idea might nevertheless point to some obscure form of truth. The matter, as I apprehend it, is simply this: The ruder material part of our nature is not changed or extinguished by civilisation. It continues, in civilisation, to exist, and to prefer its claims for a suitable exercise and gratification; and these claims must be complied with, if we would maintain the whole fabric *in equilibrio* and in health.

There is a similar philosophy regarding our mental nature. It embraces a wonderful variety of powers, sentiments, and tendencies, applicable to an equally wonderful variety of circumstances and necessities, many of which are homely and inelegant, while others are the opposite. The mind of man, in short, has rough work appointed for it in this world, as well as fine; and it has been constituted accordingly, just as the body was formed for hewing trees as well as the carving of ivory-boxes. When we go too far in mental refinement, there arises a class of evils analogous to those which befall the too delicately treated person. Not merely do we become acutely sensitive to trifling vexations, and unfit to stand the serious shocks which from time to time occur to the most happily placed people, but we grow in selfishness. Everything which does not yield an immediate return of pleasure, is felt to be a *bore*—a peculiar word, the use of which may be considered as perhaps the best exponent of this system of over-refinement in a portion of society. Ceasing to relish simple pleasures, we get few real ones at all. Disdaining simple worth and mediocre attainments, we narrow the social circle in which we may be useful. Surely this our last estate is worse than the first. At the same time, it has never been found that over-refinement subdues any of the irregular passions of the human breast; it only gives them new directions, or teaches how they may be masked. Let us not be too eager to lay bare the moral interior of the man of extreme refinement. On the other hand, is it not universally found in the ordinary world, that there may be a perfect simplicity of life, making as near an approach to innocence as our nature is susceptible of, where refinement has not been carried beyond a medium degree?

I hope, my friends, that these few imperfect observations will not be considered as a declaration of war against refinement. I am a friend, not an enemy, to refinement, and delight to see men and women improving their taste and the style of their manners, when it is done to really good issues. Only let us take care not to carry the process beyond a healthy point, for then we come in contact with evils worse than those we seek to avoid.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXV.—A QUEER CONVERSATION.

The surprise, with the exertion I had made in raising myself, overcame me, and I fell back in a swoon. It was but a momentary dizziness, and in a short while I was again conscious. Meanwhile, the two men had approached, and having applied something cold to my temples, stood near me conversing: I heard every word.

'Durn the weemen!' (I recognised Rube's voice); 'thur allers a gittin a fellur into some scrape. Hyur's a putty pickle to be in, an all through a gurl. Durn the weemen! sez I.'

'We-ell,' drawlingly responded Garey, 'pre-haps he loves the gal. They sez she's mighty hansum. Love's a strong feelin, Rube.'

Although I had my eyes partially open, I could not see Rube, as he was standing behind the suspended robe; but a gurgling, clucking sound—somewhat like that made in pouring water from a bottle—reached my ears, and told me what effect Garey's remark had produced upon his companion.

'Cuss me, Bill!' the latter at length rejoined—'cuss me! ef yur ain't as durned a fool as the young fellur hisself! Love's a strong feelin! He, he, he—ho, ho, hoo! Wal, I guess it must a be to make sich dodrotted fools o' razeonable men. As yit, it ain't fooled this child, I reck'n.'

'You never knewd what love wur, old hoss?'

'Thur yur off o' the trail, Bill-ee. I *did* oncest—yis; oncest I wur in love, plum to the toe-nails. But thet wur a gurl to git sweet on. Ye-es, thet she wur, an no mistake!'

This speech ended in a sigh that sounded like the blowing of a buffalo.

'Who wur the gal?' inquired Garey after a pause. 'White, or Injun?'

'Injun!' exclaimed Rube, in a contemptuous tone: 'no; I reck'n not, boyee. I don't say thet, *for a wife*, an Injun ain't jest as good as a white, an more convaynient she are to git shet of when yur tired o' her. I've hed a good grist o' squaws in my time—hef-a-dozen maybe, an maybe more. This I *kin* say, an no boastin neyther, thet I never sold a squaw yet for a plug o' bacca less than I gin for her; an on most o' 'em I made a clur profit. Thurfur, Billee, I don't object to an Injun fur a wife: but *wives* is one thing, an *sweethearts* is diff'rent, when it comes to thet. Now the gurl I'm a-talkin 'bout wur my sweetheart.'

'She wur a white gal, then?'

'Are allyblaster white? She wur white as the bleached skull o' a buffler; an sech har! 'Twur as red as the brush o' a kitfox. Eyes too! Ah, Billee, boy, them wur eyes to squint out o'! They wur as big as a buck's, an as soft as smoked fawn-skin. I never seed a pair o' eyes like hern!'

'What wur her name?'

'Her name wur Char'ty, an as near as I kin remember 'twur Holmes—Char'ty Holmes. Ye-es, thet wur the name. 'Twur upon Big-duck crick in the Tennessee bottom, the place whur this child chawed his fust hoe-cake. Let me see—it ur now more 'n thirty yeer ago. I fust met the gurl at a candy-pullin; an I reccollex well we wur put to eat taffy agin one another. We ate till our lips met; an then the kissin—thet wur kissin, boyee. Char'ty's lips wur sweeter than the candy! We met oncest agin at a corn-shuckin, an arterwards at a blanket-trampin, an thur's whur the bisness wur done. I seed Char'ty's ankles as she wur a-trampin out the blankets, as white an smooth as peeled poplar. Arter thet turn, all up wi' Reuben Rawlings. I approached the gurl 'ithout more ado; an sez I: "Char'ty," sez I, "I freeze to you;" an sez she: "Reuben, I cottons to you." So I immediantly made up to the ole squire—thet ur Squire Holmes—an axed him for his darter. Durn the ole skunk! he refused to gin her to me!

'Jest then, thur kum a pedlar from Kinneticut, all kivered wi' fine broadcloth. He made love to Char'ty; an wud yur believe it, Bill? the gurl married him! Cuss the weemen! thur all alike.

'I met the pedlar shortly arter, an gin *him* sech a larrupin as laid him up for a month; but I hed to clur out for it, an I then tuk to the plains. I never seed Char'ty arterward, but I heerd o' her oncest from a fellur I kim acrosst on the Massoury. She wur a splendid critter; an if she ur still livin, she must hev a good grist o' young uns by this, for the fellur said she'd hed twins shortly arter she wur married, with *har an eyes jest like herself!* Wal, thur's no kalklatin on weemen, any how. Jest see what this young fellur's got by tryin to sarve 'em. Wagh!'

Up to this moment I took no part in the conversation, nor had I indicated to either of the trappers that I was aware of their presence. Everything was enveloped in mystery. The presence of the white steed had sufficiently astonished me, and not less that of my old acquaintances, Rube and Garey. The whole scene was a puzzle; I was now equally at a loss to account for their being acquainted with the cause that had brought *me* there. That they were so, was evident from their conversation. Where could they have procured their information on this head? Neither of them had been at the rancheria, nor in the army anywhere; certainly not, else I should have heard of them. Indeed, either of them would have made himself known to me, as a strong friendship had formerly existed between us.

But they alone could give me an explanation, and, without further conjecture, I turned to them.

'Rube! Garey!' I said, holding out my hands.

'Hilloo! yur a-comin too, young fellur. Thet's right; but thur now—lay still a bit—don't worrit yurself; y'ull be stronger by'm by.'

'Take a sup o' this,' said the other, with an air of rude kindness, at the same time holding out a small gourd, which I applied to my lips. It was *aguardiente* of El Paso, better known among the mountain-men as 'Pass-whisky.' The immediate effect of this strong, but not bad spirit, was to strengthen my nerves, and render me abler to converse.

'I see you reccollects us, capt'n,' said Garey, apparently pleased at the recognition.

'Well, old comrades—well do I remember you.'

'We ain't forgot you neyther. Rube an I often talked about ye. We many a time wondered what hed becomed o' you. We heerd, of coorse, that you hed gone back to the settlements, an that you hed come into gobs o' property, an hed to change yur name to git it'——

'Durn the name!' interrupted Rube. 'I'd change mine any day for a plug o' Jeemes River bacca; thet wud I sartint.'

'No, capt'n,' continued the younger trapper, without heeding Rube's interruption, 'we hedn't forgot you, neyther of us.'

'That we hedn't!' added Rube emphatically: 'forgot ye—forgot the young fellur as tuk ole Rube for a grizzly! He, he, he!—ho, ho, hoo! How Bill hyur did larf when I gin him the account o' that bisness in the cave. Bill, boy, I niver seed you larf so in all my life. Ole Rube tuk for a grizzly! He, he, he!—ho, ho, hoo!'

And the old trapper went off into a fit of laughing that occupied nearly a minute. At the end of it, he continued:

'Thet wur a kewrious bit o' dodgin—wa'nt it, young fellur? You saved my ole karkidge thet time, an I ain't a-gwine to forgit it; no, this child ain't.'

'I think you have repaid me; you have rescued me from the bear?'

'From *one* bar *preehaps* we did, but from t'other grizzly you rescooed yurself; an, young fellur, you must a fit a putty consid'able bout afore the vamint knocked under. The way you hev gin him the bowie ur a caution to snakes, I reck'n.'

'What? were there two bears?'

'Look thur! thur's a kupple, ain't thur?'

The trapper pointed in the direction of the fire. Sure enough, the carcasses of *two* bears lay upon the ground, both skinned, and partially cut up!

'I fought with only one.'

'An thet wur enuf at a time, an a leetle more, I reck'n. 'Tain't many as lives to wag thur jaws arter a stan-up tussle wi' a grizzly. Wagh! how you must have fit, to a rubbed out thet bar!'

'I *killed* the bear, then?'

'Thet you sartintly did, young fellur. When Bill an me kim on the groun, the bar wur as dead as pickled pork. We thort yur case wa'nt any better. Thur you lay a-huggin the bar, an the bar a-huggin you, as ef both on yur hed gone to sleep in a sort o' friendly way, like the babbies in the wood. But thur wur yur claret a kiverin the paraira for yurds round. Thur wa'nt as much blood in you as wud a gin a leech his breakfist.'

'The other bear?'

'She kum arterwards out o' the gully. Bill, he wur gone to look arter the white hoss. I wur sittin by you, jest hyur, when I seed the vamint's snout pokin up. I knowd it wur the she-bar a-comin to see where ole Eph had strayed to. So I tuk up Targuts, an plummed the critter in the eye, an thet wur the eend o' *her* trampin.

'Now, lookee hyur, young fellur! I ain't no doctur, neyther's Bill, but I knows enough about wownds to be sartint thet you must lay still, an stop talkin. Yur mighty bad scratched, I tell ye, but yur not dangerous, only you've got no blood in yur body, an you must wait till it gathers agin. Take another suck out o' the gourd. Thur now, come, Billee! leave 'im alone. Le's go an hev a fresh tooth-full o' bar-meat.'

And so saying, the leathery figure moved off in the direction of the fire, followed by his younger companion.

Although I was anxious to have a further explanation about the other points that puzzled me—about the steed, the trappers' own presence, their knowledge of my wild hunt, and its antecedents—I knew it would be useless to question Old Rube any further after what he had said; I was compelled, therefore, to follow his advice, and remain quiet.

CHAPTER XXVI.

VOWS OF VENGEANCE.

I soon fell asleep again, and this time slept long and profoundly. It was after nightfall, in fact, near midnight, when I awoke. The air had grown chilly, but I found I had not been neglected; my serapé was wrapped closely around me, and with a buffalo-robe, had sufficiently protected me from the cold while I slept. On awaking, I felt much better and stronger. I looked around for my companions. The fire had gone out—no doubt intentionally extinguished, lest its glare amid the darkness might attract the eye of some roving Indian. The night was a clear one, though moonless; but the heaven was spangled with its sparkling worlds, and the starlight enabled me to make out the forms of the two trappers and the group of browsing horses. Of the former, one only was asleep; the other sat upright, keeping guard over the camp. He was motionless as a statue; but the small spark gleaming like a glowworm from the bowl of his tobacco-pipe, gave token of his wakefulness. Dim as the light was, I could distinguish the upright form to be that of the earless trapper. It was Garey who was sleeping.

I could have wished it otherwise. I was anxious to have some conversation with the younger of my companions; I was longing for an explanation, and I should have preferred addressing myself to Garey. My anxiety would not allow me to wait, and I turned towards Rube. He sat near me, and I spoke in a low tone, so as not to awake the sleeper.

'How came you to find me?'

'By follerin yur trail.'

'Oh, you followed me then! From the settlements?'

'Not so fur. Bill an me wur camped in the chapparil, an spied you a gallupin arter the white hoss, as ef all the devils wur arter *you*. I knowd yur at a glimp; so d'd Bill. Sez I: "Bill, thet ur the young fellur as tuk me for a grizzly up thur in the mountains," an the reckoleckshun o' the sark'mstance sot me a larfin till my ole ribs ached. "It ur the same," sez Bill. An jest then, we met a Mexikin who hed been yur guide, gallupin about in sarch o' you. He gin us a story 'bout some gurl thet hed sent you to catch the white hoss; some saynyora with a dodrotted long name. "Durn the weemen!" sez I to Bill. Didn't I, Bill?'

To this interesting interrogatory, Garey, who was but half asleep, gave an assenting grunt.

'Wal,' continued Rube, 'seein thur wur a pettycoat in the case, I sez to Bill, sez I: "Thet young fellur ain't a-gwine to pull up till eyther he grups the hoss, or the hoss gits clur off." Now, I knowd you wur well mounted, but I knowd you wur arter the fastest critter on all these parairas; so I sez to Bill, sez I: "Billee, thur boun for a long gallup." Sez Bill: "Thet ur sartin." Wal! Bill an me tuk the idee in our heads, thet you mout git lost, for we seed the white hoss wur a makin for the big paraira. It ain't the biggest paraira in creashun, but it ur one of the wust to git strayed on. Yur greenhorns wur all gone back, so Bill an me catched up our critters, an as soon as we kud saddle 'em, put arter you. When we kumd out in the paraira, we seed no signs o' you, 'ceptin yur trail. Thet we follered up; but it wur night long afore we got half way hyur, an wur obleeged to halt till sunup.

'In the mornin, the trail wur nurly blind, on account o' the rain; an it tuk us a good spell afore we reached the gully. "Thur," sez Bill, "the hoss hes jumped in an hyur's the trail o' the young fellur leadin down the bank." Wal, we wur jest turnin to go down, when we seed yur own hoss a good ways off on the paraira, 'ithout saddle or bridle. We rid straight for him, an when we got closter, we seed somethin on the groun, right under the hoss's nose. Thet somethin turned out to be yurself an the grizzly, lyin in grups, as quiet as a kupple o' sleepin 'possums. Yur hoss wur a squealin like a bag o' wild-cats, an at fust Bill an me thort you hed gone under. But upon a closter view, we seed you wur only a faintin, while the bar wur as dead as a buck. Of coorse we sot about doctorin you, to fotch you roun agin.'

'But the steed? the white steed?'

'Bill hyur grupped him in the gully. A leetle further down it's stopped up wi' big rocks. We knowd thet, for we'd been hyur afore. We knowd the hoss kudn't a got over the rocks, an Bill went arter an foun him, on a ledge whur he hed clomb out o' reech o' the flood; an then he lazooed the critter, an fotched 'im up hyur. Now, young fellur, you hev the hul story.'

'An the hoss,' added Garey, rising from his recumbent position, 'he's yourn, capt'n. Ef you hadn't rid him down, I couldn't a roped him so easy. He's yourn, ef yu'll accept him.'

'Thanks, thanks! not for the gift alone, but I may thank you for my life. But for you, I might never have left this spot. Thanks! old comrades, thanks!'

Every point was now cleared up. There was mystery no longer, though, from an expression which Garey had dropped, I still desired a word with him in private.

On further inquiry, I learned that the trappers were on their way to take part in the campaign. Some barbarous treatment they had experienced from Mexican soldiers at a frontier post, had rendered both of them inveterate foes to Mexico; and Rube declared he would never be contented until he had 'plugged a score of the yellur-hided vamints.' The breaking out of the war gave them the opportunity they desired, and they were now on their way, from a distant part of prairie-land, to take a hand in it.

The vehemence of their hostility towards the Mexicans somewhat surprised me—as I knew it was a recent feeling with them—and I inquired more particularly into the nature of the ill-treatment they had received. They answered me by giving a detailed account of the affair. It had occurred at one of the Mexican frontier towns, where, upon a slight pretext, the trappers had been arrested and flogged, by order of the commanding officer of the post.

'Yes-s!' said Rube, the words hissing angrily through his teeth; 'yes-s, flogged!—a mountain-man flogged by a cussed monkey of a Mexikin! Ne'er a mind! ne'er a mind! By the 'tarnal!—an when I say thet, I swar it—this niggur don't leave Mexiko till he hes rubbed out a soger for every lash they gin him—an that's twenty!'

'Hyur's another, old hoss!' cried Garey, with equal earnestness of manner—'hyur's another that swars the same oath!'

'Yes, Billee, boy! I guess we'll count some in a skrimmage. Thur's two a'ready! lookee thur, young fellur!'

As Rube said this, he held his rifle close to my eyes, pointing with his finger to a particular part of the stock. I saw two small notches freshly cut in the wood. I knew well enough what these notches meant; they were a registry of the deaths of two Mexicans, who had fallen by the hand or bullet of the trapper. They had not been the only victims of that unerring and deadly weapon. On the same piece of wood-work I could see long rows of similar *souvenirs*, apart from each other, only differing a little in shape. I knew something of the signification of these horrible hieroglyphics; I knew they were the history of a life fearfully spent—a life of red realities.

The sight was far from pleasant. I turned my eyes away, and remained silent.

'Mark me, young fellur!' continued Rube, who noticed that I was not gratified by the inspection; 'don't mistake Bill Garey an me for wild beests; we ain't thet quite: we've been mighty riled, I reck'n; but f'r all thet we ain't a-gwine to take revenge on weemen an childer, as Injuns do. No—weemen an childer don't count, nor men neyther, unless thur sogers. We've no spite agin the poor slaves o' Mexiko. *They* never did me nor Bill harm. We've been on one skurry, along wi' the Yutaws, down to the Del Nort settlements. Thur's whur I made them two nicks; but neyther Bill or me laid a finger on the weemen an childer. It wur bekase the Injuns *did*, thet we left 'em. We're jest kum from thur. We want fair fight among Christyun whites; thet's why we're hyur. Now, young fellur!'

I was glad to hear Rube talk in this manner, and I so signified to him. Indianised as the old trapper was, with all his savageness, all his reckless indifference to ordinary emotions, I knew there was still a touch of humanity in his breast. Indeed, on more than one occasion, I had witnessed singular displays of fine feeling on the part of Rube. Circumstanced as he was, he is not to be judged by the laws of civilised life.

'Your intention, then, is to join some corps of rangers, is it not?' I asked after a pause.

'I shed like it,' replied Garey: 'I shed like to join your company, capt'n; but Rube hyur won't consent to it.'

'No!' exclaimed the other with emphasis; 'I'll jine no kumpny. This niggur fights on his own hook. Yur see, young fellur, I hev been all my life a free mountainee-man, an don't understan sogerin, no how. I mout make some mistake, or I moutn't like some o' the regilashuns; thurfor I prefers fightin arter my own fashun. Bill an me kin take care o' ourselves, I reck'n. Kin we, Bill?—eh, boyee?'

'I guess so, old hoss,' replied Garey mildly; 'but for all that, Rube, I think it would be better to go at it in a reglar way—particlarly as the capt'n hyur would make the sogerin part as easy as possible. Wudn't yur, capt'n?'

'The discipline of my corps is not very severe. We are *Rangers*, and our duties are different from those of regular soldiers'——

'It ur no use,' interrupted Rube; 'I must fight as I 've allers fit, free to kum an free to go whur I please. I won't bind myself. I moutn't like it, an mout desart.'

'But by binding yourself,' suggested I, 'you draw pay and rations; whereas'——

'Durn pay an rashuns!' exclaimed the old trapper, striking the butt of his rifle upon the prairie. 'Durn pay an rashuns! Young fellur, *I fights for revenge!*'

This was said in an energetic and conclusive manner, and I urged my advice no further.

'Look hyur, cap!' continued the speaker in a more subdued tone. 'Though I ain't a-gwine to jine yur fellurs, yet thur ur a favor I wud axe from yur; an thet is, to let me an Bill keep by you, or foller whuriver you lead. I don't want to spunge for rashuns; we'll git thet ef thur's a head o' game in Mexiko, an ef thur ain't, why we *kin eat a Mexikin.* Can't we, Bill?—eh, boyee?'

Garey knew this was one of Rube's jokes, and laughingly assented; adding at the same time, that he would prefer eating any other 'sort o' a varmint.'

'Ne'er a mind!' continued Rube; 'we ain't a-gwine to starve. So, young fellur, ef you agrees to our goin on them tarms, yu'll heve a kupple o' rifles near you thet won't miss fire—*they* won't.'

'Enough! You shall go and come as you please. I shall be glad to have you near me, without binding you to any term of service.'

'Hooray!—thet's the sort for us! Kum, Billee!—gie's another suck out o' yur gourd. Hyur's success to the Stars and Stripes! Hooray for Texas!'

CHAPTER XXVII.

A 'WEED'-PRAIRIE ON FIRE.

My recovery was rapid. My wounds, though deep, were not dangerous; they were only flesh-wounds, and closed rapidly under the cauterising influence of the *lechuguilla.* Rude as my doctors were, in the matter of such a malady, I could not have fallen into better hands. Both, during their lives of accident and exposure, had ample practice in the healing art; and I would have trusted either, in the curing of a rattlesnake's bite, or the tear of a grizzly bear's claw, in preference to the most accomplished surgeon. Old Rube, in particular, thoroughly understood the simple pharmacopœia of the prairies; and his application to my wounds of the sap of the *pita* plant, obtained among the rocks of the ravine, bespoke his skill. This plant, a bromelia, is of the same genus as the *Agave Americana*, and by travellers often confounded with the latter, though quite a distinct plant from the *maguey* of cultivation. It grows in most parts of Mexico and South America, extending as far north as the latitude of 30°, and even further. There is no spot too arid or barren to give support to it. It is a true desert plant; and even on the naked rock, its curved and thorny blades may be seen radiating on all sides from the tall flower-stalk, that shoots upward like a signal-staff, to the height of twenty feet. As already observed, its uses are manifold: the fibre of its leaves can be manufactured into thread, cordage, and cloth; fences are constructed of the growing plant, and thatch of the blades when cut; its sap, distilled, furnishes the fiery but not unwholesome mezcal; and the large egg-shaped core or stem is eaten for food. Tribes of Indians—Lipans, Comanches, and Apachés—use it extensively as an article of diet. One branch of the great Apaché nation are distinguished as '*Mezcaleros*' (eaters of the mezcal-plant). They bake it in ground-ovens of heated stones, along with the flesh of the wild-horse. It is firm when cooked, with a translucent appearance like candied fruits. I have eaten it; it is palatable—I might say delicious. The mastication of it is accompanied by a prinkling sensation upon the tongue, singular to one unaccustomed to it. It is a gift of nature to the desert regions, where it grows in greatest luxuriance, and where it serves the same purpose in the economy of the savage natives as the *ixias, mesembryanthemums*, and *zamias* (the Caffre bread), upon the arid karoos of Southern Africa.

One of the most esteemed qualities of this bromelia is the cauterising property of its juice, well known to the natives of the Mexican table-land, and to the Peruvians, where several species are found of like virtues. It will cause ordinary wounds to cicatrise in a few hours, and even 'ugly gashes' will yield to it in time.

My companions had full knowledge of its effects, and having extracted the sap from its large succulent leaves, and boiled it to the consistency of honey, they applied it to my wounds. This operation they from time to time repeated, and the scratches were healed in a period marvellously short. My strength, too, was soon restored. Garey with his gun catered for the cuisine, and the ruffed grouse, the prairie partridge, and roasted ribs of fresh venison, were dainties even to an invalid.

In three days I was strong enough to mount; and bidding adieu to our camping-ground, we set forth, taking with us our beautiful captive. He was still as wild as a deer; but we adopted precautions to prevent him from getting off. The trappers led him between them, secured to the saddles of both by a lazo.

We did not return in the direction of our old trail; my companions knew a shorter route, at least one upon which we should sooner reach water, and that is the most important consideration on a prairie-journey. We headed in a more westerly direction; in which, by keeping in a straight line, we should strike the Rio Grande some distance above the rancheria.

The sky was leaden-gray, the sun not being visible, and with no guide in the heavens, we knew that we might easily diverge from a direct course. To provide against this, my companions had recourse to a compass of their own invention. On taking our departure from camp, a sapling was stuck into the ground, and upon the top of this was adjusted a piece of bear's-skin, which, with the long hair upon it, could be distinguished at the distance of a mile or more. The direction having been determined upon, another wand, similarly garnished with a tuft of the bear's-skin, was set up several hundred yards distant from the first.

Turning our backs upon these signal-posts, we rode off with perfect confidence, glancing back at intervals to make sure we were keeping the track. So long as they remained in sight, and *aligned* with each other, we could not otherwise than travel in a straight path. It was an ingenious contrivance, but it was not the first time I had been witness to the 'instincts' of my trapper-friends, and therefore I was not astonished.

When the black tufts were well-nigh hidden from view, a similar pair—the materials for which had been brought along—were erected, and these insured our direction for another stretch of a mile; then fresh saplings were planted; and so on, till we had passed over some six miles of the plain.

We now came in sight of timber right ahead of us, and apparently about five miles distant. Towards this we directed our course.

We reached the timber about noon, and found it to consist of black-jack and post-oak groves, with mezquite and wild-china trees interspersed, and here and there some taller trees of the honey-locust (*Gleditschia triacanthos*).

It was not a close forest, but a succession of groves, with openings between—avenues and grassy glades. There were many pleasant spots, and, faint with the ride, I would fain have chosen one of them for a resting-place; but there was no water, and without water we could not halt. A short distance further, and we should reach a stream—a small *arroyo*, an affluent of the Rio Grande. So promised my companions, and we rode onward.

After passing a mile or so through the timber-openings, we came out on the edge of a prairie of considerable extent. It was full three miles in diameter, and differed altogether from the plain we had left behind us. It was of the kind known in hunter phraseology as a 'weed-prairie'—that is, instead of having a grassy turf, its surface was covered with a thick growth of flowering-plants, as *helianthus*, *malvas*, *altheas*, *hibiscus*, and other tall annuals standing side by side, and frequently laced together by wild-pea vines and various species of convolvulus. Such a flower-prairie was the one now before us, but not a flower was in sight; they had all bloomed, faded, and fallen, perhaps unseen by human eye, and the withered stalks, burned by a hot sun, looked brown and forbidding. They cracked and broke at the slightest touch, shelling their seed-pods like rain upon the loose earth.

Instead of striking across this prairie, we skirted around its edge; and at no great distance, arrived on the banks of the arroyo which ran along one side.

We had made but a short march; but my companions, fearful that a longer ride might bring on fever, proposed to encamp there for the night, and finish our journey on the following day. Though I felt strong enough to have gone further, I made no objection to the proposal; and our horses were at once unsaddled and picketed near the banks of the arroyo.

The stream ran through a little bottom-valley covered with a sward of grass, and upon this we staked our steeds; but a better place offered for our camp upon the higher ground; and we chose a spot under the shade of a large locust-tree, upon the edge of the great wilderness of weeds. To this place we carried our saddles, bridles, and blankets, and having collected a quantity of dead branches, kindled our camp-fire. We had already quenched our thirst at the stream, but, although we were all three hungry enough, the dried flesh of the grizzly bear proved but a poor repast. The rivulet looked promising for fish. Garey carried both hooks and line in his 'possible sack,' and I proposed the angle.

The young trapper soon baited his hooks; and he and I, repairing to the stream, cast our lines, sat down, and waited for a nibble.

Fishing was not to Rube's taste. For a few minutes he stood watching us, but evidently with little interest, either in the sport, or what it might produce. Rube was not a fish-eater.

'Durn yur fish!' exclaimed he at length: 'I'd ruther hev a hunk o' deer-meat than all the fish in Texas. I'll jest see ef I kin scare up somethin; the place looks likely for deer—*it* do.'

So saying, the old trapper shouldered his long rifle, and stalking away up the bank, was soon out of sight.

Garey and I continued bobbing with but indifferent success. We had succeeded in drawing out a couple of cat-fish, not the most palatable of the finny tribe, when the crack of Rube's rifle sounded in our ears. It seemed to come from the weed-prairie, and we both ran up on the high bank to ascertain what success had attended the shot. Sure enough, Rube was out in the prairie, nearly half a mile distant from the camp. His head and shoulders were just visible above the tall stalks of the helianthus; and we could see, by his stooping at intervals, that he was bending over some game he had killed, skinning or cutting it up. The game we could not see, on account of the interposed stalks of the weeds.

'A deer, I reck'n,' remarked Garey. 'Buffler don't often o' late years stray so far to the suthert, though I've killed some on the Grande, higher up.'

Without other remark passing between us, we descended to the arroyo, and continued our fishing. We took it for granted that Rube did not require any aid, or he would have signaled to us. He would soon return with his game to the camp.

We had just discovered that silver-fish (a species of *hyodon*) were plentiful in the stream, and this attracted us back. We were desirous of taking some of them for our dinner, knowing them to be excellent eating, and far superior to the despised 'cat.'

Having changed our bait for some small pieces of gold-lace, which my uniform furnished, we succeeded in pulling several of these beautiful creatures out of the water; and were congratulating one another upon the delicious broil we should have, when our conversation was suddenly interrupted by a crackling noise, that caused both of us to turn our faces towards the prairie. The sight that met our eyes prompted us to spring simultaneously to our feet. Our horses already reared upon their lazoes—neighing with affright—and the wild screams of Rube's mustang mare were loud and continuous. There was no mystery about the cause; that was obvious at a glance. The wind had blown some sparks among the dry flower-stalks. The prairie was on fire!

Though startled at the first sight of the conflagration, for ourselves we had nothing to fear. The bottom on which we stood was a sward of short buffalo-grass; it was not likely to catch fire, and even if it did, we could easily escape from it. There is not much danger in a burning prairie where the grass is light and short; one can dash through the line of flame with no further injury than the singeing of his hair, or a little suffocation from smoke; but upon a plain covered with rank and thick vegetation, the case is very different. We therefore felt no apprehension for ourselves, but we did for our companion; *his* situation filled us with alarm.

Was he still where we had last seen him? This was the first question we asked one another. If so, then his peril was great indeed; escape would be almost hopeless! We had observed him a full half mile out among the weeds. He was on foot too. To have attempted a retreat towards the opposite side of the prairie, would have been folly: it was three miles off. Even on horseback, the flames would have overtaken him! Mounted, or on foot, he could not have got out of the way through those tall stalks—laced as they were by pea-vines and other trailing plants—whose tough tangle would have hindered the progress of the strongest horse!

To have returned to the near side would be his only chance; but that would be in the very face of the fire, and, unless he had started long before the flames broke out, it was evident that his retreat in that direction would be cut off. As already stated, the weeds were as dry as tinder; and the flames, impelled by gusts of wind, at intervals shot out their red tongues, licking up the withered stalks, coiling like serpents around them, and consuming them almost instantaneously.

Filled with forebodings, my companion and I rushed in the direction of the prairie.

When first noticed by us, the fire had extended but a few yards on each side of the locust-tree we had chosen for our camp. We were not opposite this point at the moment, having gone a little way down the arroyo; we ran, therefore, not towards the camp, but for the nearest point of high ground, in order to discover the situation of our friend. On reaching the high ground, about two hundred yards from the locust, we saw to our astonishment that the fire had already spread, and was now burning forward to the spot where we had climbed up! We had only a moment to glance outward, when the conflagration, hissing and crackling as it passed, rolled in front of us, and with its wall of flame shut off our view of the prairie.

But that glance had shewn us all, and filled our hearts with sorrow and dismay; it revealed the situation of the trapper—no longer a situation of peril, but, as we supposed, of certain death! He was still in the place where we had last seen him; he had evidently made no attempt to escape from it. Perhaps the knowledge that such an attempt must have failed, had hindered him from making it. The reflection that he might as well die where he stood, as be licked up by the flames in the act of fleeing from them, had bound him to the spot!

Oh! it was a dread sight to see that old man, hardened sinner that he was, about to be snatched into eternity! I remember his wild look, as the red flame, rolling between us, shut him from our sight! We had seen him but for a single instant: his head and shoulders were alone visible above the tall weeds. He made no sign either with voice or arm; but I fancied that even at that distance I could read his glance of despair.

Was there no hope? Could no exertion be made to rescue him? Could he do nothing for himself? Was there no chance of his being able to clear a circle round him, and burn off a space before the line of fire could come up? Such a ruse has often availed, but no—never in such ground as that! The weeds were too thick and tall—it could not be done—Garey said it could not be done.

There was no hope, then. *The trapper was lost!*

A FÊTE AT TZARSKO-SELO.

No one who has not tried it can conceive an idea of anything much more tiresome than St Petersburg in summer. Ennui is the prevailing sensation, and the all-expressive word by which to describe it. So soon did that terrible ennui seize upon us, and weigh down our spirits and depress even our bodily powers, that before we were settled here—that is to say, before we had given up our passports, and taken out our billet of residence—we were occupied only by the thought of getting away from this city of white houses and stately monotony.

It was a foolish thought, yet we acted upon it, and flew off to Tzarsko-Selo—which word means the seat, or village, of the czar—about twenty-five versts from the capital. A verst is three-quarters of an English mile; and as the railway brings the citizens there two or three times a day, it forms a very pleasant and favourite excursion, especially for strangers.

When the emperor is there, and in summer-time, the difficulty of getting lodgings is extreme, and the price paid for them exorbitant. All the pretty wooden houses that form the village of the czar, are occupied by the followers of the court, or the officers and their families. We got a sufficiently wretched abode in the house of a man who had been an English boy till he was ten years old, but having then gone to sea in the service of Alexander I., he had grown into a personage very common in Russia, and very disagreeable in general, because it usually happens that the best qualities of the natives to whom they assimilate are not those which they adopt. We have met others, however, of this class to whom the observation would apply much more than it does to this old seaman, whose Russian wife, though married to an Englishman for more than thirty years, could not comprehend the least word of our language. How English blood can ever become so changed as to make an Englishman tolerate a Russian housewife, is rather mysterious. For my part, I will only venture to relate that, having discovered the double purpose to which the store-room was put, where were kept the butter, cheese, milk, preserves, and most other articles of daily consumption, I made a silent resolve never to eat a morsel of any similar things that I did not purchase and bring into our rooms myself.

Hardly were we located in our new abode than we left it in order to get into the park of Tzarsko-Selo. The hope of shade after the uniform glare of St Petersburg was reviving. We took a wrong direction, or rather wrong entrance, which, after a long circuit, suddenly led us into the midst of a quite unexpected scene.

We were ignorant that it was the festival of the fine regiment of guards whose white uniform and dark faces now appeared ranged in a line on the grass before us. It was the festival of their patron saint to whom the regiment is dedicated, and therefore a festival to them.

The spectacle was a curious and very striking one, not the less so for being also a surprising one to us. A picked body of men stood in line; I think there was not a quarter of an inch variation in the equality of their uncovered heads. They held their glittering helmets in their hands; and close before them stood a tall, fair, comely officer, in the prime of life, but with a look of care on his brow, an expression on his face that impressed one with the idea that he was employed in a service he disliked—serving against the grain, as we say. I looked at him with interest, for I thought that he did not like the service of Russia—that he would be glad to throw off the white uniform he wore—that he was perhaps a Pole, or one of the many fragmentary parts that willingly or unwillingly compose that mighty empire.

The whole green space was dotted over, and in the background thronged, with more splendid and varied uniforms, and many of the finest figures that could be seen were set off by more gorgeous equipments. None struck me as having the same expression as the officer who stood before the troops—an expression hard to describe, otherwise than that of distaste to the life he led. But a bell sounded; this officer took off his helmet, turned round, and accidentally cast his eye on me. I met that full blue eye direct, and almost exclaimed aloud: 'The emperor! the tzar himself.'

What is there in an eye accustomed to power that makes itself felt? There were far more dashing uniforms, far more commanding figures present, but there was no eye that, when it looked full at you, had the same force, conveyed the same sense of power.

A gentleman who joined us, said he had not seen the tzar for eighteen months, and would scarcely have known him, so much was his countenance and general appearance altered. The ruler of such an empire, and of such a one, too, when engaged in a miserable war, must have known enough in these eighteen months to mark his brow with care, and his countenance with dissatisfaction. On turning round, and uncovering his head, as I have said, the Emperor Alexander II. walked with helmet in hand to a gay-looking little tent, in which an altar was placed, and from which now issued the exquisite voices of the priests and choir singing the appropriate service for a festival, which, like most Russian ones, was half religious, half military. He stood there while it lasted. Of the officers outside, I saw a few, a very few, bless themselves, and bow at stated times; but the generality paid no sort of attention to what was going on. The soldiers crossed themselves, and bowed their heads occasionally, and the movement, when made simultaneously, had a curious effect.

As soon as the service was over, and while the choir still sang, a green and gold covered priest, with long hair streaming to his waist behind, and long beard flowing down before, came half flying from the tent, so quickly did he move along, followed by his obedient master, the tzar of All the Russias. The priest bore in one hand a basin of holy-water, and carried the *asperge*—I must use a French term, not knowing the English one—in the other. He dipped this sort of brush or twig in the water, and flung it at each soldier's face. They stood this remarkably well, in only one or two instances winking the eyes as the water was jerked at them; their imperial master witnessing their behaviour as he walked along the line with the priest.

The whole was to us a novel and a remarkable scene: the sun shining full on the glittering helmets, which were held in an even line; the wild-looking priest, with his un-European air; and the mechanical-looking tzar, who seemed to inspect this performance of the blessing of the soldiers.

After it was over, the emperor very kindly walked down the group—a very small one—of spectators, in order to shew himself, or give them the opportunity of getting a military salute in return for their salutations. They drew back as he passed, but did not make any other demonstration of respect. For our parts, we bowed, as we do in England, very deeply, which obtained us not only a salute, but another cast from that lordly eye, which somehow sinks straight into the mind, and is not forgotten. What must have been such a one from that true type of an autocrat, the Emperor Nicholas, if that of the mild, benevolent-tempered Alexander is felt! It was not imagination that caused me to trace on that countenance the expression of a mind or disposition that would have naturally found its congenial sphere in other employments, or another sphere than these the duties of a position prescribed. I did not know whose countenance it was that I thus expounded, and I was told afterwards that it had greatly changed since the time when the Emperor Nicholas I. left to his son such a heritage of care as the crown of Russia must be to a thoughtful mind or a benevolent heart. After the troops were blessed, they were feasted in the palace court, and we went away. A day or two after, I began to think my physiognomical science had been at fault.

Harry and I were walking in the park, and admiring a splendid, perfectly white Newfoundland dog, and an equally pretty, in its degree, white Italian greyhound. An officer and lady approached: he wore the loose gray overcoat now prescribed to officers as well as soldiers, and a round red cloth cap, like what is called a smoking-cap, on his head; in his hand he held a half-consumed cigar. A tall lady, in a plain shawl and very plain straw-bonnet, by no means of a fashionable shape, since it did not merely cover the back of her head, leaned on his arm. They were chatting and smiling together. A more perfectly free-from-care couple one could not see. The white Newfoundland dog, with its tail like an immense ostrich plume, attracted more of my notice: it was only in the act of passing that I met once more the full blue eye, and felt again whose it was, but felt it differently, for the face no longer seemed to say: 'Pity, as well as fear me.' Harry, who was a little behind, drew up and said: 'That lady smiled at me, and I never saw her before.'

'Do you not know who she is?'

'Not in the least.'

'That lady is the Empress of Russia—the tzarina.'

A lengthened O! and then a look of profound thought on Harry's face, followed the information. Could that careless, happy-looking man be the same we had seen so shortly before? It was the same; and in the different aspect perhaps a clue to the native character of the individual might be found. When I related this to a lady afterwards, she accounted for the former expression I had noticed by remarking that it was on that day he had received the new British minister, Lord Wodehouse, who had come to St Petersburg on the conclusion of the war. But surely this reception was more likely to remove than to increase the frown of care and dissatisfaction from the imperial brow.

The grounds of Tzarsko-Selo, though artificial, as everything here is, afford a delightful escape from St Petersburg. There is more than a chance of losing one's self, too, in them, an accident which can by no manner of means happen to you in that straight, clear, and conveniently built capital. An artistic gentleman, with something of an Irish mind, having the organ of disorder instead of that of order in his head, told me he could not enjoy Tzarsko because not a leaf was allowed to wither on the ground, and all the walks were swept and reswept all day long. Notwithstanding that this is a fact, I did enjoy it; although, having thoughtlessly carried in my hand a little broken flower, I found it excite the attention of two royal keepers, who gazed upon it most suspiciously.

In the evening, we took as our guide through the extensive and labyrinthine grounds a little serving-maid, whose cheerful, smiling face, and friendly, sociable manner had not the least affinity to our English notion of the Russian serf—the white slave; and indeed, abhorrent as the system is, our common notion of its subjects is a sort of serious caricature.

Gaiety is not a natural attribute of the Russian character, nor of the Russian countenance; on the contrary, even when smiling or laughing, there is, in the expression of the Russian peasants, who alone may now be considered as purely Russian, a something of gravity, or rather melancholy, which is generally indicative of feeling, although they are perhaps peculiarly exempt from that characteristic.

We found a band playing upon the terrace beside the palace, and a great many persons of all ranks walking there—the low and the high together. To this spot our Russian maid was most partial; but our object being a ramble through trees, and an escape from human beings, we contrived to draw her away from the promenade, although to her evident perplexity, as she seemed to think we must be acting under some misapprehension. It is surprising, however, how quickly intelligent these peasants are, and with how much comparative ease they will comprehend what might puzzle a higher order of English intellect. The only really stupid servant I met in Russia was a Pole; but even this Pole, I recollect, was surpassed in dulness by a German. What the Russian peasantry might be made of by cultivation, must be apparent to the strangers who see them in their present more than half-barbaric state.

Tzarsko-Selo is the principal, and, it appears, favourite summer palace of the tzars. The great Peter was its founder, and indulged here also in his favourite fancy of tree-planting: the avenues of plane-trees are said to have been planted by his own hand. Everything Russian is, however, doomed to be at one time or other destroyed by fire; and so, though added to and adorned by Elizabeth and Catherine, the palace was re-edified by Alexander I., who re-dedicated the monuments which Catherine II. had erected to her favourites, to his brave comrades in arms.

Our host told us, as we walked in these most magnificent gardens, that each berry, or fruit the size of the top of his finger, which the tzar ate cost him 100 rubles (L.15) a year. They say that the bare expense of keeping the walks and gardens in the beautiful order in which they are constantly preserved, amounts to 100,000 rubles annually. It is consoling to know, that the old and invalid soldiers, whose only other portion would be beggary, after twenty-five years of compulsory and unpaid-for service, are the labourers and care-takers employed in this expensive work.

I thought our artist, having a taste for elegant disorder, rather exaggerated the reputed neatness of these grounds, and almost fabulous exactitude of their keepers. But it is true that the walks, trees, and water are just as much the objects of care as the rooms and furniture of the most precise Dutch house can be. No leaf dare rest on the ground, if it has the audacity to alight there; a withering flower must not shed its petals over its mother-earth; the poet dare not say to the last rose of summer in the garden of the tzar:

Thus kindly I'll scatter thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden lie scentless and dead.

Such an act would not be justified by any poetic licence at Tzarsko-Selo.

When we consider that the walks which are thus kept without speck or spot appearing, cleaned, brushed, it might be said dusted, from morning to night, would occupy a length of about 150 versts if united in one, it will give us some notion of Russian order and discipline. There is a staff of, I believe, 600 men employed in this work. The grounds are most agreeably diversified, and open pretty views from time to time; lying among the Duderhof Hills, they have the advantage, rare in Russia, of an elevated site. The edifices in them are fantastic; but where all is, or must be, artificial, a fantastic aspect is desirable. The interior of the palace is one scene of eastern splendour and singular variety. The amber chamber is the most famous: the vast quantity of amber with which the walls are covered was presented by Frederick the Great of Prussia to Catherine II.

We entered the Hermitage, which was re-edifying, the walls being gilded and painted elaborately; it is meant as a sort of family retreat with the privileged guests of the imperial court, like the long celebrated one of Catherine II. at St Petersburg: here also is the apparatus for placing and removing the royal meals without the appearance of servants, in the manner which so much delighted Peter I., but which is now used in large public institutions in his country.

The grounds are adorned with Chinese and other buildings, and a lake, on which are pleasure-boats for the amusement and nautical edification of the little dukes. There is also a model-farm at the extremity of the grounds, but we did not reach it. Our maiden guide had been trying to make me comprehend a long speech, and the fact that I did not understand her becoming at last indisputable, she proceeded to a mode of explanation equally incomprehensible. She picked up a small piece of stone, and shewed it to me, pointing at the same time in an opposite direction to that in which we were going. I imagined that the pebble, in her opinion, possessed some efficacy, and I took care to let her see that I put it safely into my pocket; whereupon she laughed, and said: 'No, no!' and taking up another, touched it with her finger, and pointed in the same direction, throwing it away. We turned, and walked in that direction, and came to the stone fountain—a poetic one. It is called the Fountain of the Broken Pitcher, and is a poem in itself. There is the young girl mourning over her pitcher, which lies broken at her foot, with the water of the fountain pouring through its broken-off neck. It is fortunately not of plaster, and therefore this figure is one of the few things of the kind which do not look miserably dilapidated in this climate.

It was to shew me that there was a stone fountain to be seen, our guide had so symbolised her meaning. The water is an exquisite treat after the horrors of the Neva; and I remember some traveller having related that, in his time, the young daughters of Nicholas I. used to come here in the early morning, attended by a domestic carrying a glass, in order to drink from this fountain a draught perhaps as beneficial as those mineral ones which other lands produce.

It may be that these then young princesses have since thought of the young girl weeping at the stone Fountain of the Broken Pitcher. To how many, whose young hopes would have drawn long and deeply from this earth's fount, has the pitcher appeared to be broken precisely when it was filled!

A STRANGE FAMILY.

O mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities;
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good but strained from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometime 's by action dignified.
Within the infant rind of this weak flower
Poison hath residence and medicine power;
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part,
Being tasted slays all senses with the heart.
Romeo and Juliet.

There was once a time when every one who paid attention to the forms of vegetable life which cover hill and dale with such profusion, acted solely under the belief that each plant contained a remedy for some particular disease. Although we can now afford to smile at the strange properties which these old herbalists consequently attributed to plants entirely undeserving of the honour: although we do not believe with Gerard that 'when the weasel is to fight with the serpent, she armeth herself by eating rue against his might,' or that 'rosemary giveth speech unto them that are possessed of the dumb palsy;' yet it is not the less true that there are groups of plants distinguished by powers as wonderful as the fables of the twilight of scientific knowledge. Some of these remind us of the awful phenomenon occasionally revealed to us in history, of a family pre-eminent in crime and cruelty, whose career is one dark story of lust and murder, and whose name survives in the hatred and abhorrence of posterity. Others, again, the friends and benefactors of mankind, have satisfied the hunger or quenched the thirst of grateful nations through all time. It is, however, to a family that comes under both these classes—one that at the same time is prolific in poisons, and supplies part of the daily food of millions—that we would at present direct the attention of those who feel an interest in the wonders of creation. And we doubt whether any division of the vegetable world could be selected which would be found more replete with interest.

Science has given to a well-defined class the name of *Solanaceæ*, or nightshade-worts, from the solanum or nightshade, one of its members; and it states, as a general characteristic, the energy of the narcotic principle residing in the juices of the roots, leaves, and fruits, though of course subject to modifications in each species. The only representatives of the Solanaceæ native to England, are poisonous in a fatal degree; but as they present no peculiarities in the mode of operation, it will be sufficient simply to name them as useful to the student in giving him an idea of the characteristics of the whole order. We find in our hedges and woods two nightshades (*Solanum*), one with purple, and the other with white flowers—the deadly nightshade or dwale (*Atropa Belladonna*), with dark purple bell-shaped flowers and shining black berries; and the henbane (*Hyoscamus niger*), with large blossoms of a dusky yellow, exquisitely pencilled with purple lines.

The first plant, however, over which we would wish to linger is one of the atropas, which has been rendered celebrated by the strange superstitions of which it has been the object. We allude to the mandrake (*Atropa mandragora*). This flower is indigenous on the shores of the Mediterranean; it presents to our view a tuft of dark shining leaves a foot long, and a flower of a dull white, veined delicately with violet, succeeded by a round ruddy fruit of a pleasant odour. But the remarkable part of the mandrake lies under ground. The root, which is often four or five feet long, is of a reddish colour, and, as it usually divides half-way down into two or three branches, sometimes assumes a singular likeness to the human body. The fruit of the plant was supposed to be useful in cases of barrenness. Allusion is made to this in the story of Jacob; and the same idea still prevails in Greece. In the middle ages, this vegetable mimicry of the human form gave rise to singular superstitions, no doubt increased by the highly coloured narratives of pilgrims and crusaders. By these accounts, a kind of animal life is attributed to the mandrake; shrieks of pain were elicited from it by violence; madness fell upon any who heard those weird cries; and certain death awaited the man bold enough to pull it by the roots. It was also pretended by the quacks who sold the roots, that they were charms against all mischief; and to enhance their value, they declared that they grew only under gibbets from the flesh of the criminals which fell thence to the ground. Shakspeare has availed himself with his wonted skill of some of these wild fancies:

> And shrieks, like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
> That living mortals, hearing them, run mad.

And again:

> Would curses kill, as doth the mandrake's groan,
> I would invent as bitter-searching terms,
> As curst, as harsh, as horrible to bear.

It is but justice, however, to the Elizabethan age to state, that Dr Turner wrote at some length to expose these errors, and stated that he had himself dug up roots without receiving harm or hearing any noises. Modern science recognises the mandrake as a dangerously narcotic plant; which is, however, useful as an anodyne, when administered with care by an experienced hand. The fruit is said to be exhilarating, and to be a favourite food of the Arabs.

When we consider the next plant to which we shall devote any space, we shall be struck by the wonderful provisions of an all-wise Creator for the sustenance of those dependent upon his bounty. Whoever looks cursorily at the potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), and remarks its dark leaves, its dull lurid flowers, and its fetid smell, recalling to his mind the wild nightshade of our hedges, would at once pronounce that the herb was dangerous, and certainly unfit for food. His judgment would not deceive him, as the plant is really highly poisonous; and it is only under a modified form that a portion of it becomes so valuable as food as almost to rival the produce of the cereals. It is very generally supposed that the tuber, which we eat, is a deposit of fecula or nourishing matter in the fibres of the root; this, however, is a mistake, as it really is an underground branch in a changed and swollen state. We shall be convinced of this when we consider that the so-called eyes of the potato are true buds, which, upon the tuber being buried in the earth, in favourable conditions of warmth and moisture, are developed into branches; and this, indeed, is the familiar way in which the gardener propagates the plant. This very useful vegetable came originally from America, but it is uncertain from what part. It has been found growing wild on the mountains of Chili, and recently on the peaks of Mexico; but it was from Virginia that Sir Walter Raleigh introduced it into England. Its range of cultivation is very great, extending from Iceland to the tropics; it must be remembered, however, that in the latter regions it requires height of position, and flourishes only when about 10,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Nor is the potato the only member of this class that appears upon our table; although we can only name a few condiments and esculents of less importance. Such are the capsicum, which furnishes a piquant fruit familiar to us in the form of Cayenne-pepper; the tomato or love-apple (*Lycopersicum esculentum*), associated for ever with the imperishable memory of Mr Pickwick and the great marriage case; the egg-apple (*Solanum melongena*), the long purple fruit of which is daily seen in the markets of Paris, and forms a favourite dish of the Anglo-Indian.

Very different, however, from these tempting aids to the palate is the fruit of the apples of Sodom (*Solanum Sodomeum*), so famous for their fair outward show and their rotten core. This favourite of the poets grows abundantly on the desert shores of the Red Sea; it has rough, divided leaves, handsome purple flowers, and a smooth golden shining fruit, the flesh of which is at first firm and of a bitter taste, but afterwards decays into the dry, ash-like substance which disappoints the expectant traveller.

We shall notice only one more member of this interesting family, the history of which furnishes us with one of the most extraordinary instances of the imitative faculty in man ever exhibited. Without entering into the vexed question of the effects of tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*) upon the habits and manners of an age, we may observe, that its adoption as an indulgence was in direct violation of the usual law of progress. The habit of smoking its leaves, instead of having first prevailed among civilised nations, and so extended to the more barbarous, has, on the contrary, been borrowed from the actual savage, and from thence ascended to the most exalted ranks of the most refined society. Great doubt rests upon its native country; but it is certain that the Americans first applied it in the way so well known now: they themselves called the plant *petun* and *yati*, but Europeans have adopted the name from their clay-pipes (*to-bacco*). It is a popular superstition that Sir W. Raleigh first introduced it into England; but Camden gives the palm of priority to a Mr Ralph Lane, while others contend for the claims of Sir F. Drake. It is well known what opposition it met with at the hands of governments, and how, nevertheless, in an incredibly short time it spread over the whole world.

This is but a glance at a truly strange vegetable family; but to many of our readers it may be a suggestive one, and to many more it will recall the quaint but fine verses of Cowley:

If we could open and inbend our eye,
We all, like Moses, should espy,
E'en in a bush, the radiant Deity.

POPULAR PUPPETS.

The mention of popular puppets will no doubt conjure up in all minds the image of a certain hook-nosed and crook-backed gentleman, who beats his wife, and kills his children, and everybody else who comes in his way, for the amusement of our street-population, and whose misdeeds are laughed at, not reprobated, probably because in the end he makes away with the very spirit of evil himself. But though friend Punch has ever played a prominent part among popular puppets, and has, indeed, in our country become nearly the sole representative of the race, it is not our intention to treat of any individual puppet, however great a favourite, but of the fortunes of the tribe in general.

Although, in a previous article on the subject of puppets, we have maintained that the history of these wooden actors presents three phases—the hieratic, the aristocratic, and the popular—it must not be supposed that these have been regularly successive: on the contrary, the various phases have imperceptibly melted into each other, and most probably in modern Europe the popular character of puppets was never at any period entirely absorbed in the ecclesiastical; and the fairs, and villages, and public streets of the middle ages have had their humble and profane puppet-shows descended in direct line from those of the ancients, and entirely distinct from the ecclesiastical exhibitions mentioned in our previous article. However, eschewing all deep antiquarian research on the subject, we shall rest contented with taking up their history at a later period, when mysteries and miracle-plays, as a general rule expelled from the churches, were taken up by various brotherhoods; and the *motion*-man, with his theatre on his back, and his wooden actors in a bag, traversed the country from one end to the other, representing in every parish, at all seasons, and at a very small cost, the subjects performed by the living actors, at stated seasons, and in large cities only; and also reproducing in miniature the pageants and May-games which at certain periods of the year formed the delight of the people.

Through these latter—in which the heroes of the popular ballads always played a conspicuous part—Robin Hood, Maid Marion, Little John, and all the personages belonging to that cycle, were introduced on the puppet-stage in England; as also the giants Gog and Magog, and the hobbyhorses, which, in spite of the people's affection for them, were suppressed towards the middle of the reign of Elizabeth as 'damnable relics of paganism;' and the Moorish, or Morrice-dancers, as the popular pronunciation would have it, who from the earliest times performed in the pageants, and who took so firm a hold on the popular taste, that Hawkins tells us, in his history of music, that but very shortly previous to the period at which he was writing, a Moor, dancing a saraband, was an obligatory personage in every puppet-show. It was probably out of deference for this taste that Punch and Judy danced a saraband in the ark, in the puppet-show of the Creation, followed by the Deluge, mentioned in the *Tatler*, as having been considered very instructive for young people; for puppets have never been afraid of anachronisms, and ever since his appearance in the country, Mr Punch has indeed mixed himself up with every event of antediluvian as well as postdiluvian history, thus shewing his own belief in the very ancient origin ascribed to him by the learned.

When, in the middle of the fifteenth century, the acting brotherhoods began to intermix their miracle-plays, which were the precursors of the historic drama, with moralities, which may in like manner be said to have been the forerunners of modern comedy, the puppet-players at once adopted the innovation—no difficult matter for them, who, with the conjuring powers of a knife and a piece of stick, could at any given moment swell the number of their troop to any amount required; and thus Perverse Doctrine, Pride, Gluttony, Vanity, Humility, and Piety, and all the other vices and virtues, which were personified and played their parts in the moralities, had their antetypes in the puppet-shows—public opinion singling out, in anticipation of friend Punch, the Old Vice, or Old Iniquity, a standing character in the moralities, as its prime favourite. Again, when about a century later, the great revolution in dramatic literature took place, which substituted for the moralities, masks and interludes, until then in fashion, tragedy and comedy under their modern form, the repertory of the motions, as puppet-shows were then still called, underwent the changes of the day, without, however, entirely abandoning their ancient favourites. In the new *genre*, also, the wooden actors seem to have approved themselves no mean rivals of the living ones; for various writings of this and subsequent periods contain bitter complaints against the puppet-players, for poaching in the preserves of the legitimate drama, even the stately muse of tragedy being made to stalk their mimic stage.

But let it not be supposed that at this period puppets were still exclusively houseless vagrants, strolling from village to village, and from fair to fair, without a local habitation of their own, and giving their performances in the open air. Far from it. They were now installed in permanent theatres, not only in the most populous localities of the city of London, but in many provincial towns. The puppet-theatres of Holborn Bridge and Fleet Street were in high repute during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and those of Eltham and Brentford were so renowned, that they drew crowds of visitors even from the capital; while on the other side, grave provincials came up to London, more especially to visit the puppet-shows. These last were indeed so generally accounted one of the most agreeable recreations of the gentry, that Phantaste, in Ben Jonson's comedy of *Cynthia's Revels*, mentions them as among the greatest pleasures a woman in any condition of life could desire to enjoy. Even as late as 1712, Arbuthnot includes the love of puppet-shows among the characteristic traits of the Londoners; and a writer in No. 377 of the *Spectator* bears similar testimony to the prevalent taste, when, in making a list of places where people are likely to come by a violent death, and enumerating the accidents that have occurred there, he mentions 'Lysander smothered to death at a puppet-show.'

The puppet-shows referred to in this latter case, were no doubt those of a certain Mr Powell, who, having attained a great reputation at Bath, had removed to London, and established a theatre in Covent Garden, where Punch and Judy, in company with Dr Faustus, according to the *Tatler*, threw into the shade the new Italian opera in the Haymarket, and drew away the most fashionable part of its audience—Mr Punch in particular proving, in the eyes of the fair sex, a most dangerous rival to the Italian singer Nicolini. Alas! poor Punch! how is he fallen from his high estate! What fashionable belle ever casts a glance at him now, when his shrill tones announce his presence at the corner of some street, where his audience is generally composed of ragged urchins and idle nurse-maids, though now and then a witty statesman or a humorous man of letters may stop and enjoy a laugh against all the rules of conventionality!

The exact date of Punch's arrival in England is probably difficult to ascertain, as the learned differ on the subject, some saying that he came in with William of Orange by way of the Hague, others maintaining that he arrived here long before, direct from Italy. At all events, Italian puppets were already known in England under Henry VII.; and Chalmers, in his account of the early English stage, quotes a letter from the privy council of 14th July 1573, addressed to the lord mayor of London, authorising him to allow some Italians to exhibit their 'strange motions' in the city. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, French puppets also were established in London. Indeed, there seems in those days to have been as great an interchange among nations of these wooden artists, as there is in the present day of their living prototypes; for English puppets visited France, and Germany was at one time not only inundated with English, French, Italian, and even Dutch and Spanish actors, but the foreign puppets followed in the wake of these, to the great detriment of the wooden performers of indigenous growth, of which there had always been a goodly supply. Italy, the native land, it may be said, of modern puppetry, must, indeed, at a very early period have sent her puppet-players abroad, for at the commencement of the seventeenth century, already, all the *titereros*—as they are there called—of Spain were Italians, and so likewise were the *bonifratres*, as the itinerant puppet-show men of Portugal are called; retaining in this name a smack of their ecclesiastical origin, which is further evinced in the monkish dress they almost invariably use there as well as in Spain. Italian exhibiters of puppets have even been met with in Siberia and among the Cossacks of the Don. So great, however, has ever been the affinity between the spirit of puppets and that of the nations among whom they have taken up their abode, that the foreign nationality of their exhibiters has never prevented puppet-shows from being thoroughly national wherever they have appeared. Thus, we find that at the period we have alluded to in Spain, as well as subsequently, when all Spanish cities also had their regularly established puppet-theatres, the subjects represented were not Italian, but thoroughly Spanish, and Pulcinella, though naturalised under the name and title of Don Cristoval Pulichinela, was thrown completely into the shade by the personages borrowed from the popular ballads of Spain, such as Moorish and Christian knights, giants and sorcerers, hermits and saints, the conquerors of Mexico and Peru, and the truly national bull-fights. Even when treating classical subjects, it seems that Spanish puppets know how to infuse into them the national spirit. A French traveller in Spain in 1808, tells of having been present at Valencia at a puppet representation of the death of Seneca, who having been a native of Cordova, had a right to appear on so national a theatre. In the puppet-show, as in history, the famous philosopher was represented as being put to death by order of Nero, by having the veins of his arms opened while in a warm bath. The streams of blood which were made to flow from his arms by means of red ribbons, are said to have given universal satisfaction; but what most delighted the pious subjects of his most Catholic majesty, was to see the heathen philosopher carried up to heaven in the midst of fireworks, and to hear him pronounce there a recantation of his pagan errors, and a declaration of Christian faith in the orthodox form.

In like manner, in Germany puppets adapted themselves to the metaphysical and cosmopolitan tendencies of the national mind. But the place held by puppets in the theatrical history of Germany has been so peculiar and so important, that it merits more than the passing notice we should here be able to give it; and therefore we shall pass at once from Germany to France. Need we say that France, the home of light-hearted gaiety, wit, and parody, excelled at all times in puppet-shows; for the progress made in this, as in all other arts, is in proportion to the encouragement given, and the appreciation met with. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, Paris had already its permanently established puppet-theatres; and in 1649, Polichinelle—who, by the by, a French authority declares, is not an offshoot of the Italian race of that name, but a native of the country, in fact, nothing less than a modified type of the popular Béarnais, the galliard Henri IV.—in 1649, we say, Polichinelle had already attained to a degree of popularity that caused his name to be adopted by writers of political pasquinades against Cardinal Mazarin, and authorised them to place in his mouth such a vaunt as this: 'I may maintain, without vanity, Messire Jules, that I have always been more welcome to the people, and in higher consideration with them, than you; for how often have I not with my own ears heard them say: "Let us go and see Polichinelle;" but who has ever heard any of the people say: "Let us go and see Mazarin!"'

Brioché, the famous tooth-extractor and puppet-showman, mentioned in a previous article, and master of this very popular Polichinelle, is the first exhibiter of puppets in France whose name has been handed down to posterity. No doubt he was worthy of this distinction, for it seems that it was the witty sayings prompted by him that gained for his wooden dependent such great popularity. The public favour was, however, for a long time divided between Brioché's monkey Fagotin and Polichinelle; but Fagotin ultimately fell in a duel with a certain M. Cyrano de Bergerac, who mistook the disguised monkey for a lackey making a face at him, and against whom Fagotin valiantly drew his sword when attacked—a fact that made him even more renowned in death than he had been in life. No doubt, Fagotin had many successors; for up to late in the eighteenth century a monkey was as necessary an appendage to a puppet-show as a dog is in the present day; but with the exception of one, belonging to a certain Nicolet, and which has been celebrated in verse by M. de Boufflers, we know of none that has rivalled the fame of Brioché's Fagotin. After Brioché's death, the direction of his puppet-theatre devolved upon his son, who maintained its high reputation in spite of the numerous competitors which arose in course of time; and among which, not the least formidable was the so-called Theatre of the Pigmies, opened in the Marais du Temple in 1676. These pigmies—who from the puppet point of view ought rather to have been called brobdignags—were, according to the programme of their director, La Grille, 'what has never been seen before: human figures, four feet high, richly dressed, in very great numbers, who perform on a vast theatre pieces in five acts, interspersed with music, ballets, flying-machines, and changes of scenery, and who declaim, walk, and gesticulate like living persons, without being held suspended.' But though La Grille took good care not to call his performances operas, the fact of their being so could not be concealed; and however much he might appeal to the wooden qualities of his actors, they were nevertheless legally adjudged to have trespassed on the privileges of the regular opera, and sentenced to cease their warblings.

The greatest triumphs achieved by Parisian puppets were won between the years 1701 and 1793, during great part of which period they furnished parodies of all the productions of the French Opera, the Italian Theatre, the Théâtre Français, and the Opéra Comique, very often giving evidence in these of great literary acumen, and delicate yet telling irony; while they carried on a constant war with the *entrepreneurs* of those establishments, who, jealous of their success, sought to place all kinds of difficulties in their way. The repertory of the puppet-theatres was not, however, limited even to the wide field of parody which the regular theatres opened to them: they drew within their witty sphere every event, political or social, that occupied the public for the time being, and counted among their literary contributors Le Sage and other distinguished wits and literati of the day. But though allowed a liberty of speech far beyond any tolerated in living actors, puppets in France seem at last to have been placed under the same censorship that weighed upon the legitimate drama; and to this may perhaps be attributed the degeneracy which began to manifest itself in the puppet-shows at the commencement of the last half of the eighteenth century, when wit, parody, and satire were superseded by mere mechanical surprises and *pièces à grand spectacle*. The taste of the public seems, however, to have kept pace with this degeneracy; for the number of puppet-theatres in Paris went on augmenting up to the close of the century, and in 1793, large puppets, under the name of Pantagonians, and which were also exhibited in London, again made their appearance. Among the transformations for which these puppets were more especially famous, we have seen one mentioned in which the different limbs of a barrister were gradually detached, and transformed into so many clients—a trick which we have no doubt would be frequently repeated off the stage, were not the secret lost. These same Pantagonians performed in the Théâtre de la République a grand pantomime, entitled *Les Métamorphoses de Marlborough*. What these were, we do not know, but they may have been ugly enough.

Puppets outlived the storms of the Revolution in France, but not without bearing their share in its vicissitudes; for we learn from one of Camille Desmoulins' papers in *Le Vieux Cordelier*, that Polichinelle was guillotined during the Reign of Terror—a fact that makes us fear that he had been giving himself aristocratic airs. Indeed, how can it be wondered at that he should, when we consider the high patronage which he and his fellows had enjoyed for centuries in France. In the present day, however, the puppets of France are reduced, like their compeers in England, to seek the suffrages of the sovereign people; and we are bound to state, that the great development attained by puppet-theatricals in England, Germany, and France at various periods, was in a great measure owing to the persecution, and, in the case of England, the actual interdict under which the regular drama and its votaries laboured at these periods; and that as soon as the latter were relieved from the heavy burdens and strong prejudices that militated against them, puppets sank into comparative insignificance.

In Italy, however, whether owing to its being the indigenous soil of modern puppets, or to the fact that an arbitrary censorship still weighs upon the regular theatres there, puppets are to this day in as flourishing a condition as they ever were at former periods in France, England, or Germany. Not a city but has one or more puppet-theatres, visited by all classes of society, and where you are not only enlivened by the wit and humour which have fled from the more regular establishments, but where the lovers of opera and ballet may feast their ears upon the master-works of Rossini, Bellini, and Verdi, and their eyes upon wooden Taglionis and Rosatis, whose pirouettes and *entrechats* surpass anything ever accomplished by human legs; and who, when bouquets are showered upon them, put their little hands upon their hearts, and bow themselves out as gracefully as any of their flesh-and-blood rivals.

TALK UNDER THE STUARTS.

MONSIEUR GABRIEL DUGRES, of Saumur, 'teacher of the French tongue in the most illustrious and most famous university of Oxford,' published, in the year 1639, a hand-book of travel-talk for the benefit of Mr Hyde, Mr Hampden, or any other gentleman who might meditate performing the 'grande tour.' It consists of a series of dialogues, written not without a certain quaint humour, and containing much information as to the manners and customs of the day. It is on this account we select portions of the talk that have no special reference to the grand tour. The title of the book is *Dialogi Gallico-Anglico-Latini*, and it is dedicated to the Prince of Wales. A few years afterwards, it may have formed the pocket-companion of that 'sacred twig of the most holy tree that has ever flourished in this happy isle,' as he is styled by the author, who little foresaw how useful a knowledge of the French tongue would prove to the 'sacred twig,' and how well acquainted it was destined to become with the happy isle's hereditary foe.

In the first dialogue, we are introduced to 'a scholler, his land lord, and a teacher of the French tongue.'

The scholar commences: 'I desire much—I am very desirous. I have a great minde to lerne to speake French, English, Spanish, Italian, High-Dutch, Greek, Hebrew.' Not that he is likely to be such a *helluo linguarum*, but the opportunity is a good one for teaching names.

The landlord informs the teacher that 'an outlandish gentleman' wishes to see him. The professor visits the 'scholler,' and they come to terms at once.

Scholar. What doe you take a moneth?

Master. Ten shillings a moneth.

'How many times a weeke will you teach me?'

'Once a day.'

'How long will you tarry with me?'

'An houre at a time.'

'What time of the day will you come? I would gladly bestow the morning upon my more serious studies.'

'I will come, then, after supper.'

'I thinke that time somewhat unseasonable,' &c.

Certainly any scholar of the present day would say so, but our meal-times have altered as much as tutors' charges.

The sixth dialogue is headed: 'Complements betweene him that inviteth and him that is invited before they sit at the table. The entertaining of one at table, and the complements they doe use in it.'

The 'complements' consist in refusing to take the place of honour till the host exclaims: 'Sir, the dinner is spoyled, the meat growes cold; sit downe, I pray you, for we doe the company wrong.' Then come depreciations of the dinner on the part of the giver, and the opposite on the part of the receiver; and we next observe that Englishmen were in the habit of asking for a cushion to sit upon, as appears by the exclamation of the host: 'I doe wonder very much that you English gentlemen can not sit without a cushion, and, nevertheless, run poste upon saddles as hard as iron.' The 'English gentleman' explains, that on horseback they are taking exercise, but on the chair they are sitting still, and so are afraid of catching cold. In the *Hand-book of Travel-talk for* 1856, there is no mention made of chair-cushions. Englishmen have grown hardy, and learned to dispense with such effeminacies.

Here is something curious about knives:

'Have you no knife?'

'I have forgot mine at home.'

'I doe renounce unto that gentility, for one looses many good bits for want of a knife.'

'Sweet heart, friend, can you lend me a knife? I will give it you back againe when I have done with it.'

'Here is one at your service, but it does not cut very well, and it is not very cleane.'

'It is good enough, I thanke you.'

The conversation then turns upon carving.

'I am a poore carver.'

'It is your modestie that makes you say so: we know you Frenchmen excell in that art..... In England, we leave that to women, if they be in the company; for as they sit in the upper end, so doe we give them the honour to let them take the paines to cut, and serve the meates; which is the cause that it is a rare thing to finde men which can cut and carve foule.'

'That is very true in families, but you have no women in your colledges, which keep you from learning to carve.'

'There needs no great cunning to carve a penie part, or a penie-halfe-penie part. As for Plato his men, they are as seldome seen there as the eclipse of the moone.'

The carving commences, and calls forth the following remarks:

'Fie, fie, you must not tare the meat so with your hands, and touch it with your fingers. Take that little fork, and touch nothing at all with your fingers, or at least touch but the bit which you will eat, for you might offend and distast the others in handling the meat so slovingly.'

'It is not good to use so much ceremonie among schollers.'

'I doe confesse it: but it is good to use himselfe betimes to be polite, to handsomenesse and neatnesse.'

Next comes a specimen of the conversation of the day:

'I can not take my meales as a dumb beast, which does nothing but chew and swallow downe without saying a single word.'

'Would you have the beasts to speak?'

'It is good for a Carthusian, or for an hermite that is shut up to say nothing when he dines. I would have my tongue to ply as well as my teeth.'

'Does it not work well enough when it tasteth the meats?'

'I do not meane it so. This hare is drier than a stone. I think that this goose is one of those which did awake the watch of the Capitolium, when as our Gauls went neare to take it; for it is harder than wood. Peradventure it is that which was in the arke of Noah.'

The tide of learning is stopped by a last lesson in good-manners:

'Dip the crust in the sauce, the gravie.'

'You have a good cook; but he has not spared for pepper; for it is so extreamly peppered that it burns my tongue.'

After eating follows drinking. 'Manner of drinking one to another: the sorts of wine. . . . . Talkes ordinarily used in drinking, and in taverns,' &c.

'Come on; fill me some wine quickly..... This glasse is not cleane. . . . . Rub it with water and salt, that it may be cleare and cleane..... Oh, sir! what doe you doe? You have not drunke all. You must empty the glasse. Turne it adowne, that I may see if there be anything left. . . . . So they drinke in the palatinat, that there is not a drop left with which a fly might quench its thirst.'

'To whom have you drunke?'

'I have drunke to that gentleman.'

'Who has seene you drunke? You must drinke one againe.'

'The French freedome is to be condemned in this, for it giveth every one leave to drinke as he thinketh good, at his discretion.'

'To whom shall we drinke now?'

'Let us drinke to this gentleman, his mistresses health.'

'Let us rather drinke to yours, for mine does not deserve that one should drink to her.'

'Why? Are you out of her favour?'

'No; but it is for some other reason.'

'You will not confesse. Come on, sir, to her that possesseth this gentleman's heart. To that faire Angel of Love, and that miracle of Beauty. To the most eminent over all those that are of the female kind.'

'Sir, you give her titles undeserved by her.'

'On the contrary, they are far below her merit: the admiration whereof must teach me some new language, to praise it according to its worth; or else, I must be content to reverence it with an humble silence, haveing no language able to expresse it.' And so forth.

Next comes some information about wines:

'Will you drinke a cuppe of sack. Vous plaist il de boire un coup de vin d'Hespagne; in the Latin, poculum vini Hispanici. . . . . It tasteth wonderous well. It is a cup of dainty wine. We drinke none so good in favernes.'

'It is because they spoyle it. They doe sophisticate it, and mingle it in tavernes. Goe, and draw a pinte of Muscaden.'

'Halfe a pinte will be enough; or a quartern of a pinte.'

'What say you? We must drinke, carrousse, like Templars, like sponges. . . . . I am almost drunke. I thinke that you will foxe; I begin to see double.'

'It is because that glasse is made of the mettall of which are made the spectacles that multiply everything.'

'You must need lead me home by the armes, as a young bride.' So ends the dinner.

'Shall we rise from the table?'

'We must drink the cup of charity, as they say.'

'Sir, you forget to put up your knife. If it please you, I will teach you a way that you shall never faile to put it up. You must alwaies drink a cup after you have put it up, and so you shall never forget to put it up.'

'Sir, please you to take a pipe of tobacco?'

'Fie, what doe you speak to me of? I wonder much that you wil take that stinking smoak, that poisoned weed.'

'Ah, sir, you are much deceaved. . . . It is the most soveraigne and physical hearb in the world.'

Having acquired the French tongue, the scholar sets out on his travels. Crossing the Channel was a service of danger then.

'The whirle-winds, tempests, and stormes are very dangerous. The pyrates and robbers upon the sea are no lesse dangerous,' he is told. Nothing daunted, he proceeds to strike a bargain with a skipper.

'What shall I give you to carry me over into France?'

'Halfe a pistoll—10s.'

'It is too much; I will give you foure francs—8s.'

'Sir, I will not carrie you over under a hundred sols, or five francks, an angell, or 10s.'

'Well, then, I will give you what you aske me.'

'Provide yourself with victuals before you goe upon the sea.'

'The going over is not long, as I believe?'

'It is but of halfe a day, if you goe from Dover to Calais; or of one day and of a night if you goe to take land, to aboord at Deepe.'

The ship sails and becomes becalmed. 'The sea is very calm; still wee doe not goe forward. We should need to have some rowers; but we have no oares, and we know not how to row.'

'I feare, lest after this calmenesse of the sea, wee have some sea storme, which may cast us upon some rock, or upon some sandie banck, and so our shippe may suffer shipwrick.'

After a while we find the travellers approaching the land, where they are carried ashore on the backs of the boatmen.

'Why doe you not carry us to land in your boat?'

'It is not the custome.'

'I see well that this is a plot to get mony. What must you have?'

'A card escu a man.'

'Halfe is enough, or five sous.'

Arriving at the hotel, they are greeted with, 'Gentlemen, will you be pleased to come this way? Excuse me if I goe afore you; it is to shew you the way;' on which the traveller makes a memorandum in his pocket-book: 'Servants are very courteous in this countrey.' He changes his money, and receives information as to the value of French coins. 'There is a denier, which is not worth halfe of one of your farthings; a double, which is worth two deniers; a liard, which is worth a double, and a denier. There be now but few liards in one peece. A Carolus is worth 10 deniers; a sol, 12 deniers; 5 French sols make even 6 English pence..... A golden crowne is worth ten shillings; we call them also crownes at the Sunne. A pistole is worth 20 shillings, &c. I thinke that this pistole is not good: where is the touchstone? Rubbe it a little upon your hayre, or upon your shooes, and if it be red, it is a signe that it is naughty.' The tourist visits Rouen, and is astonished at the condition of French horses. 'Good Lord, how leane they be! You starve them. There is neither hay in the rack, nor oates in the manger. They will not be able to carry us three steps of the way.' Experience confirms his opinion. 'My armes are bruised, lamed, with the very beating of my horse. Hee will not goe neither for rod nor spur.' Fatigue sends him early to bed.

'Heare you, is there nobody but I that lieth in this chamber?'

'There is a very honest gentleman that is to lie in it.'

'Doe you know him very well?'

'Not very well.'

'How doe you know, then, that he is an honest man?'

'He looketh like one.'

'Intreat him to come to bed quickly,' &c. 'I have not slept well to-night. The fleas have tormented me so extreamly, that I could by no meanes sleep.'

From Rouen he goes to Paris. 'I doe intend to stay two or three weeks in Paris, to see the town, and the kings court; then I will goe to Orleans, for it is better and cheaper living there. From Orleans I will goe down by water in a boote as far as Saumur. And by the way, I will goe to the castles and the townes of Blois, Amboise, Tours.'

At Saumur he takes up his quarters, and is charged 'ten French crownes a moneth, three pound for diet, chamber, and washing.' He expostulates: 'It is much—it is fifteen shillings a week. We are very well in Oxford for nine or tenne shillings a weeke.'

'That may be true: but you must consider that we pay here a great deale more taxations than they doe in England. Moreover, you drinke alwaies wine here at your meales, whereas in Englande they give you but beere.'

During his stay at Saumur, the tourist probably perfects himself in the language, for we hear no more of his travels. He learns all that is necessary for a gentleman to know. We find him at one time acquiring the art 'of dancing the cinque pace; of making a leg after the fashion to dance with the musick,' and incurring the reproof of his dancing-master: 'Stand upright with your body, and when you dance, stretch not so your breeches out.' At one time he is fencing, or having his beard cut 'with a pick-devant, shave all the hairs to the skin, and leave but a little spriggle, &c. This is as well as can be. My beard is cut well enough, but only here is a haire that goes over the other.'

At length he departs. And it were well if every English traveller of the present day deserved to be thus apostrophised by his host: 'Sir, I thanke you most humbly. Truly we have reason to remember you in your absence, for you have carried yourselfe so honestly towards us, that we should be injurious to your name if we should not honour it with a perpetuall remembrance.'

COPYING BY LIGHT.

We have to propose to our readers, especially our fair ones, a scientific amusement of an elegant and inexpensive kind. We would teach them to make copies of pictures, engravings, maps, music, &c., by means of light, and according to a process which costs hardly anything beyond the price of the paper.

1. Having fixed upon the object to be copied, take a sheet of good paper, and spread a solution upon one side of it composed of 60 grains of blue-stone or sulphate of copper, 30 grains of bichromate of potass, and 8 ounces of water. This composition should be spread upon the paper by means of a glass rod; or if you do not happen to have such a thing, any smooth phial will do as well.

Paper prepared with this solution is of a beautiful yellow colour; when dry, it is fit for use, and should be used as soon as convenient, for when kept long, it loses its sensibility. Place the prepared side of this paper against or upon the face of the picture to be copied, and allow the back of the picture to be exposed to the light; and in the course of a quarter of an hour, if it is a bright sunny day, you shall see—what you shall see. If the weather is dark and cloudy, you will have longer to wait, perhaps not less than half an hour; but having allowed it to remain exposed to the light for this time, if you take it into a room partly darkened, or with the blind drawn down, a very clear *negative yellow* picture will appear on the prepared paper. You must now pour a few drops of nitrate of silver solution on it, of the strength of half a dram to two ounces of water, and spread this quickly over by means of your phial or glass rod, and instantaneously a very beautiful and vivid red picture will make its appearance.

The back of the picture, however, having been exposed to the light, while the face was pressed against the prepared side of the paper, the objects copied will be formed in a contrary direction to that in the original, so that the part of the original picture situated at its right side will appear on the left side of the copy, and *vice versâ*. This might be no great matter, as regards some pictures, but it is obvious that by such a process neither maps nor music could be copied. When necessary, however, as in the case of maps and music, the original may be exposed to the light, and the prepared paper pressed to the back, which would give the true position. But it is always desirable, when the subject admits of it, and more especially in the case of a thick engraving or picture, for its *face* to be pressed against the prepared paper, as in that case the copy is produced much sharper and more distinct than the other way.

To keep the picture well pressed against the prepared paper, a heavy piece of glass may be placed on the top, as the rays of light will not be at all lessened in their intensity by this arrangement.

These photographic pictures may be fixed by washing well in pure water, and when dry, a gloss may be given by spreading a little gum-water over the surface. So much for the process, and now for the cost. 60 grains of sulphate of copper, and 30 of bichromate of potass—the first solution—have hardly an appreciable pecuniary value, and indeed the chemist you deal with would not think of charging anything for so small a quantity of these substances; yet this solution will be sufficient to take more than 200 copies. The second solution—half a dram of nitrate of silver—at four shillings per ounce, costs threepence, which, added to two ounces of water, and a few drops spread over the yellow negative picture, will be sufficient for between 50 and 100 pictures. As we have hinted, therefore, the expense of this elegant and useful amusement is, in reality, if we except the paper—which is cheap enough, you know—next to nothing at all. We may add, that the picture to be copied need not be taken out of the book, if it is in one: it is only necessary to place the prepared paper underneath its face, while the piece of glass laid upon its back will keep open the book, and allow access to the light.

II. *Another process.*—Make a solution composed of half a dram of nitrate of silver to two ounces of water, and spread a few drops of this solution over a sheet of paper by means of a glass phial. When dried in the dark, it is fit for use. Proceed precisely as in the above process, to copy the picture; and after being left exposed to the light for about five to fifteen minutes, according to the thickness of the picture, a *negative* picture will be found on the prepared paper, having the light part of the original dark, and the dark parts light. It now becomes the question how to turn this negative picture into a positive one, and this is effected in the following way: After the negative has been well washed in pure water, and fixed by passing it two or three times through a solution of common salt, it is ready, when dry, to print from. Prepare your sheet of paper in the same way as the other, and when dry, press its prepared side against the negative picture; then allow the back of the negative to be exposed to the light, and in a few minutes you will have obtained a fine positive picture, which can be fixed by passing it through a solution of common salt.

III. *Process for copying positive collodion portraits from glass on paper.*—Make a solution composed of half a dram of nitrate of silver to one and a half ounces of water, and spread a few drops of this solution, by means of a glass phial or rod, over a sheet of paper, which must then be put in a dark place till dry, when it is fit for use. The portrait or picture to be copied need not be taken out, but the back of the *passe-partout* merely opened. Sometimes liquid jet is employed for backing collodion pictures, but more commonly cotton velvet. If velvet, it can be removed, and a piece of the prepared paper, sufficient to cover the portrait, substituted, taking care that its prepared side be pressed against the collodion side of the portrait. Having done this, the face of the passe-partout may be exposed to the light, and in a few seconds the prepared paper at the back of the portrait will be seen to darken. When sufficiently dark, the passe-partout may be removed from the light, and the prepared paper taken off, when it will be seen to present a positive copy of the picture on the glass. To fix these impressions, just pass them once through a solution of common salt, and wash in pure water.

The expense of this process is hardly appreciable, since from 200 to 300 copies may be produced by half a dram of nitrate of silver, in one and a half or two ounces of water, the cost only threepence; two or three drops of which are sufficient for an ordinary sized portrait.

GLOSS FOR A HORSE'S COAT.

Lately going to the country to spend a few weeks with a friend of mine, I drove a very handsome horse, and a good one, but was always annoyed about his coat; it was more like a lot of bristles than a horse's smooth skin, and all the grooming he could get 'wouldn't do it no good.' My friend, who is a great horse-breeder and fancier, made me try giving him a few raw carrots every day to eat out of my hand, betting me a basket of wine that he would have a good smooth coat in three weeks; and he was right, for I lost my wine—all but three bottles, which I drank myself—but got in return a beautiful, sleek, glossy coat for my horse, which I would not change for a dozen baskets, and all from eating a few raw carrots daily. He tells me it is infallible. If you think your readers would profit by it, you may publish this suggestion in that valuable *Spirit* of yours.—*American paper.*

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.

PARTING FOR AUSTRALIA.

Here, sitting by the fire,
I aspire, love, I aspire—
Not to that 'other world' of your fond dreams,
But one as high and higher,
Compared to which your real, unreal seems.

Together as to-night,
In the light, love, in the light
Of our completed joy we see no shade;
And from our hope's reached height
All things are possible and level made.

So do we sit and view
Clear as true, love, clear as true,
That wondrous valley over southern seas,
Where in a country new
Your hands make for me a sweet nest of ease.

Where I, your poor tired bird—
(Nothing stirred? Love, nothing stirred?)
May fold her wings and be no more distressed:
And troubles may be heard
Like outside winds at night, which deepen rest.

Where in green pastures wide
We 'll abide, love, we 'll abide,
And keep content our patriarchal flocks;
See leaping at our side
Our little brown-faced shepherds of the rocks.

Ah, tale that's easy told!—
(Hold my hand, love, tighter hold:)
What if this face of mine—*you* think it fair—
If it should ne'er grow old?
Nor matron cap cover this maiden hair?

What if this silver ring
(Loose it clings, love, yet does cling)
Should ne'er be changed for any other?—nay,
This very hand I fling
About your neck, should—Hush! To-day 's to-day;

To-morrow is—ah, *Whose?*—
You 'll not lose, love, you 'll not lose
This hand I gave, if never a wife's hand
For tender household use,
Led by yours fearless into a far, far land.

Kiss me, and do not grieve:
I believe, love, I believe
That He who holds the measure of our days,
And did thus strangely weave
Our opposite lives together—to His praise!

He never will divide
Us so wide, love, us so wide:
But will, whatever chances, safely shew
That those in Him allied
In life or death are nearer than they know.

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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'How old is Mr Thackeray?' 'Who won the Derby in 1850?' 'What is a *fiat* in bankruptcy?' 'When did the Tipton Slasher fight his first mill, and who with?' 'Was Sir Robert Peel the premier ever a cotton-spinner, or was it his father, the first Sir Robert?' 'When did Mr Macready leave the stage?' 'In what year was Greenacre hanged?' 'Who could sing highest, Madame Catalani or Jenny Lind?' 'Is Mr Disraeli, or was he ever, a Jew?'

We have pondered much on these questions, contained in the Weekly Luminary, and read by fifty or a hundred thousand of the shopkeepers and work-people of London. Did these questions ever reach the sanctum of the editor, there to be read, ruminated over, investigated, and answered? If really sent, did they arise out of bets, or from a curiosity thirsting for all kinds of useful and useless knowledge? We have a theory that the truth comprises a portion of all these suppositions; but the reader will, perchance, not be sorry to accompany us in a ramble among the journals, to see how far, and under how many varieties of aspect, these odd questions and answers, notes and queries, present themselves; and we leave him quite at liberty to form his own judgment on the matter.

In the old days of the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, there can be no sort of doubt that 'Lesbia' and 'Will Hopeless,' and 'Monimia' and 'Sophronia,' were brain-products of the Addisons and Steeles; and that the pretended letters from these correspondents were simply pegs whereon to hang pleasant essays. The great value of those effusions, apart from the delightful English in which they are written, consists in the picture they present of the state of society in the days of Anne and George I. In our own day, reading has penetrated to a lower stratum in society, though still not low enough; and we have no sort of doubt that, whether the 'answers' belong to actual 'questions' or not, there are tens of thousands of persons who would be glad of an opportunity for solving knotty doubts through the medium of the newspapers. The desultory and accidental accumulation of knowledge—new, or true, or both, or neither—by persons too much engaged with the bread-and-butter question to devote regular hours to study—plays no small part in forming the minds of those around us; and the weekly 'answers' thus become important, even if the querist be no more corporeal than Mrs Harris herself. We say 'weekly,' for it is the weeklies that mostly do this work. There are one or two crotchety almanacs that give algebraical and geometrical problems in each number, to be answered by ingenious correspondents twelve months afterwards; but these lie quite out of our path. Nor do the majestic quarterlies come under notice: they scorn such small tactics as question and answer, being addressed to readers of education and high tone of taste and thought. The monthlies, too, though neither so few nor so 'far between' as the quarterlies, come pretty nearly under the same category in this matter. As for the dailies, who could expect queries and answers in papers so overwhelmed with business? Every issue is in itself a bundle of new facts, ready to be eagerly devoured by the world; and the editors have neither time nor space, inclination nor necessity, for groping into small answers on small subjects. Many of the weeklies, too, keep equally aloof. Some, of small circulation and high price, reach the hands of readers who would not care for such food; while a few others, of large circulation and low price, such as the reader has now before him, are almost wholly filled with matter original and paid for, and apportioned by the editor in conformity with a pre-arranged system, neither needing nor admitting the question-and-answer machinery.

Exceptions thus made, there remain a large number of weekly periodicals in London, and doubtless in other places, addicted to the fashion now under notice. The knowledge-box of Mr Editor is aided by the brains of other persons, briefless barristers included; and even if the questions be not really sent—well, no matter; the wisdom of the answer is just as good. Who knows but that many a blue bag in Westminster Hall, filled with nothing but flatulency, could, if it had the gift of speech, tell of its master earning a crust by answering legal questions in weekly newspapers, or by fashioning answers to imaginary questions? The journals devoted to special subjects—law, medicine, war, religion, music, theatricals, the fine arts, commerce, racing, hunting, the ring (not connubial)—have, as a matter of course, or are supposed by the readers to have, in their editorial sanctum, the wherewithal to solve problems on those specialties. We must except from any companionship with this large group of journals that delight of all bookworms, *Notes and Queries*, with its pages crammed full of facts for which we might hopelessly search elsewhere, and authenticated in so many cases by the real names of the writers.

Let us summon into court one week's budget, and look at it; and let us begin with a journal devoted to military and naval affairs. A question appears to have been asked touching the privileges of the much-favoured military staff, for Mr Editor says: 'There is nothing unusual in the medical officer's requiring the staff and their families to attend at his quarters; if they are incapable of doing so, of course it is the surgeon's duty to attend on them.' The great beard-question is thus treated: 'A general officer can of course order the beard to be taken off: the moustache is allowed by regulation.' 'Cold Without and Damp Within' receives the following response to a complaint about camp-arrangements: 'Yes; you are not the only sufferer at the Colchester camp: the drainage is bad, or there would not be so many pools of water surrounding you.' A poor lieutenant, who finds it a tight matter to live like a gentleman on his pay, illustrates a query and a complaint by what he doubtless regards as satire steeped in poetry:

'Your services are very great,
Of them I'll take a note;
But can you serve the ministry?
Pray, have you got a vote?
An extra shilling still you ask,
But surely you should know
A Whig ne'er gave away a thing
Without a *quid pro quo*.'

Here is a journal devoted to the civil service. It tells a real or seeming correspondent—'The essential thing in applying to a minister or patron, is to know what to ask for—what place is meant or likely to become vacant. Unless you can specify the berth you aspire to, you will be put off with a vague promise, assured that your name has been put on the list of applicants, and there will be the end of it.' Nothing more likely, we would add. A man of humble mind, having the lowliest office in the customs department in his thoughts, is told: 'The candidate for a tide-waitership must be under twenty-five years of age; the examination prescribed is—writing from dictation, arithmetic in the first four rules, with the different weights and measures.' Next turns up a legal journal, in which the questions and answers are not on those matters of law which a lawyer may be supposed to know by heart, but on such professional points as the following: 'How can an attorney become a notary-public; what fees are there, and to whom payable?' Turn we next to a medical journal, where not only are there queries affecting diplomas, medical colleges, hospital lectures, surgical cures, pharmaceutical preparations, and medical apparatus; but practitioners seek to increase their knowledge by asking questions of each other. Thus, one medical man writes: 'Would any of your readers have the kindness to inform me where I can find an account of *Rodent ulcer*, or what are the important distinctions between it and *Epithelicama?* I have a case at present, which, so far as I can tell from the description I have consulted, appears to be one of rodent.' Very likely he will get an answer next week in the same journal.

Next, our eye lights upon a journal connected with mining affairs, and with the whereabouts of lodes, seams, veins, beds, strata, cross-courses, adits, and shafts. Mr Editor throws cold water on a querist who consults him about coal and collieries in Canada. Another correspondent is informed that 'The relations between landowners and mining-companies differ in different counties; that in Cornwall the ground is leased generally for twenty-one years; and that the rent paid is a royalty or percentage, varying from one-twentieth to one-eighth of all the produce raised.' Another journal, a luminary on railway matters, anxious to shew that railways are the great fact of the age, encourages or invents all kinds of queries thereupon, and allows correspondent A to answer correspondent B thus: 'As an instance of the value of railways, I have had a sack of potatoes up a hundred miles from the country at a cost of conveyance, including delivery at my door near London, of 1s. 9d.; by which, at about half-price, I have obtained better potatoes than I can get in London.' A third among these useful, practical, commercial, manufacturing journals, draws out the following bit of boiler-wisdom: 'I have seen a boiler kept very clean by arranging a mud-collector in the form of a very large inverted funnel at the end furthest from the furnace, the funnel having a blow-off pipe at the bottom.'

The religious journals are not without their queries and answers, pertaining to matters consistent with the characters of the several works. Sometimes the *odium theologicum* peeps out, in the form of a query intended to poke fun at, or imply censure upon, a rival sect. Thus, a correspondent tells Mr Editor that, being at the house of a Conference friend, he found that smoking was in full operation, and that a barrel tobacco-box bore the inscription, 'Conference Smoking Mixture.' Whereupon he asks: 'Can any of your readers throw light on this little Conference stranger? I thought it might perhaps be a sort of indulgence which that august body had thought fit to bestow on candidates for the ministry, who, prior to being admitted, have to abjure the use of tobacco: a sort of privileged exempted weed, intended for the use only of those in the ministry.' The editor, in all human probability, would not be disinclined to find or make an answer to this real or sham query, containing the usual amount of sarcasm on those who do not belong to 'our party.'

The sporting newspapers are especially rich in this kind of unpaid-for information. So many facts have a living interest in the minds of sporting-men—horse-racing, steeple-chasing, hunting, dog-fighting, cock-fighting, prize-fighting, yachting, boat-racing, cricket, bowls, wrestling, quoits, golf, foot-running, pedestrianism, fishing, jumping, billiards, bagatelle, chess, draughts, backgammon, whist—games and sports indoors and out, with money-gambling and without—that they are, or these newspapers assume that they are, ever desirous of obtaining trustworthy information, especially on the laws or rules by which each sport is governed. The editor is always supposed to be 'up' in every part of his subject. Here, in the example now before us, a querist is told that 'Whatever the sire or dam of a fighting-dog may be, no man for that purpose can, with any approach to certainty, count upon the *game* or punishing qualities of the whelp.' Another is informed, 'A horse may have twisted forelegs, fleshy feet, thrushes or corns, may be fretful and awkward in his slow paces—and yet be a brilliant hunter over a country.' Were these really queries, by real querists?

But of all these answers to correspondents, the most ample, curious, and important are those found in the Sunday, or rather Saturday, newspapers that circulate among the middle and working classes. There are several of these, the sale of which ranges from 50,000 to 150,000 copies per week. All the coffee-shops, eating-houses, and public-houses in London—for it is of London and its journals we chiefly speak—take in one or more of these journals; and as a newspaper of large size can now be purchased for twopence, copies in great number find their way to the homes of tradesmen and working-men. Small shopkeepers as well as working-men greatly relish the bits of information given in these papers under the heading 'Answers to Correspondents.' Whether there are really any such correspondents, and how many if any, and if none, how much a column the author is paid for his answers, are secrets buried in the tremendous breast of the editor. At anyrate, if no queries are put, they might be put, and they justify the answers hypothetically if not *bonâ fide*. Let the reader look over our shoulder at the following curious medley: 'Fieschi's attempt on the life of Louis Philippe was made in 1835.' 'Bismuth is a metal.' 'The bayonet takes its name from Bayonne, where it was invented.' All these appear as if answers to direct questions. In the next example, a correspondent and Mr Editor agree in taking to task a distinguished writer for a *lapsus* in composition: 'Is the following correct in its grammatical construction? "Before Maggy could open the door, Mr Pancks, opening it from without, stood without a hat, with his bare head in the wildest confusion, looking at Clennam and Little Dorrit over her shoulder."' To which query Mr Editor replies, that Charles Dickens is at fault; the proper construction being, 'looking over her shoulder at Clennam and Little Dorrit.' Plain matter of fact then appears: 'Brighton chain-pier is 1134 feet long.' Then a bit of commerce: 'The amount of bills of exchange in circulation at one time, in the ordinary state of public credit, is L.140,000,000.' Then a confession of editorial ignorance on a matter pertaining to balloon novelties: 'We cannot name any person who would be likely to speculate in a balloon-steering apparatus.' Here follows a sensible reply to a supposed question on which publishers—more shame to them—are not seldom on a blunder-track: 'Bi-monthly strictly means *every two months*, but the phrase is frequently used for *fortnightly*.' And now we encounter a piece of information, professedly an answer to a question put by some Paterfamilias anxious for the economical education of his children: 'Take up your quarters near Tonbridge Wells. There are free grammar-schools there, with sixteen exhibitions of L.100 each to the universities, two of L.75, one of L.20, and six of L.16. All boys are considered foundationers whose parents or guardians live within ten miles of Tonbridge.' By a startling jump, without any preparation whatever, we come to the very delicate subject of a lady's age: 'Madame Vestris was fifty-nine years of age at the time of her death.' Some Thespis or Thalia, presumably yearning to follow the footsteps of the Faucits or Nisbetts, or perhaps the Rachels or Ristoris, is told: 'You must work hard, and serve an apprenticeship in the provinces, to be capable of keeping a good position on the London stage.'

So curious and practically serviceable are many of the answers given, whether to real questions or not, that an industrious compiler has lately brought into a compact volume several thousand such, from a dozen or more of the London periodicals, based on a principle of selection in which the useful rather than the merely entertaining is studied. Especially is the collection rich in legal lore, matters relating to debts, bills, notices, contracts, apprentices, and so forth. The questions and answers relating to *wives* are not the least curious, nor, it must be added, the least mournful, as indicative of thoughts or troubles in which the welfare of women has a share. 'How can a wife, deserted by her husband, enforce claim for support?' 'Is not a wife, who refuses to maintain her children, punishable as a vagrant?' 'Has a wife, who deserts her husband, any right to her children or to her husband's property?' 'When is a wife's evidence against her husband admissible?' 'Can the wife of a convict marry?' 'If a husband deserts his wife, and she remains ignorant of his whereabouts for seven years, can she legally marry again?' It must in justice be stated, that the queries relating to husbands are nearly as numerous as those affecting wives.

The most amusing, unquestionably, of these communications bear relation to the tender passion and its important affairs. Some of the journals, of small price and large circulation, profess to give ready admission to queries and expressions of sentiment from swains and maidens, on love, courtship, marriage, flirtation, bridal etiquette, and the like, and as readily give answers or advice. *Clara* is informed: 'We think our correspondent has been acting very imprudently. A young lady should wait to be sought; she seldom gains much in esteem or admiration by taking the initiative in love-affairs. It may please the fancy of a man for a day or two to be courted by a pretty girl; but cool reflection will in due time suggest that she may possibly be as charming to some other favoured swain as to himself.' *Eveline de Courcy* (these suppositious young damsels mightily affect fine names) is told that she 'must just follow her own feelings; we cannot prescribe rules for the treatment of other persons' acquaintances. If you want to get thoroughly rid of them, cut them; if you want to keep them at a distance, be cool to them: they will understand you.' Who 'they' are, is a mystery known only to Clara and the editor. *Edwin* is advised: 'Don't be too hasty; you know not what changes may take place in your mind and circumstances within a year or two. Make no long engagements with young ladies; neither they nor you are to be trusted.' Edwin is probably not yet quite eighteen. Was it love, or delicate sensibility, or Byronic moodiness, or sublimity in an all-round collar—was the querist a lady or a gentleman, to draw forth the following editorial response?—'We have passed through many a dream of thought, like our correspondent, and found comfort and sorrow mixed up in all. Life is a compound of the bitter and the sweet, and the one seems necessary to correct the tendencies of the other. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the Tree of Life.' Which profound aphorism we will leave to work its due results on the mind of the reader.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

THE STRUGGLE IN KANSAS.

The election of a delegate to congress, from the territory of Kansas, in November 1854, was followed, as has been said, by dire events. The free settlers were indignant at the unauthorised voting of pro-slavery men from Missouri, and the Missourians endeavoured by acts of outrage to intimidate and expel the settlers. Violence, however, had not yet attained its climax. The great struggle was to take place on the 30th of March 1855, when the inhabitants were to choose a legislature. Preparatory to this event, Governor Reeder caused a census to be taken of the population, which was found to consist of 8501 souls. This number included the unenfranchised part of the community, 242 slaves and 151 free negroes; those entitled to vote amounting to 2905.

As the great day approached, parties of Missourians entered the territory, and planted themselves at every polling-place, with the avowed design of voting for candidates who would make Kansas a slave state. As many as 5000 of these desperadoes, equipped with arms, and bringing tents and provisions, thus took their ground, resolved to commit a grossly illegal act, by representing themselves as actual inhabitants of the territory. As there is not usually any register of voters in the States, where elections are often a kind of scramble—the very sheriffs, on such occasions, lending themselves to party purposes—it is not difficult for bands of resolute individuals to carry everything as they please. Even in the city of New York, at the last election, as is stated by the local press, parties of rowdies floated from polling-place to polling-place, and cast votes at them all, in order to return their favourite candidate. How much more easily could such infamous proceedings go on in the wildernesses of Kansas!

Well, the election takes place. Notwithstanding threats of personal violence, the settlers came pretty freely forward; but of what avail against the host of intruders? On examination, it was found that the number of legal voters was 1310, and of illegal voters, 4908. With the exception of two, all the members returned were pro-slavery men, and a number of them were residents in Missouri. It being the duty of the governor to receive the returns, and grant certificates to enable members to assume office, Reeder, after, as is alleged, investigating each case, set aside the election in seven disputed districts, thus creating two vacancies in the council and nine in the house of representatives. He issued a certificate, besides, to one member of council and one member of the house, not the individuals whom the judges of the election had returned. To all the remainder, consisting of eleven councilmen, and seventeen representatives, he granted certificates. On his ordering a new election to be held on the 24th of May for filling up the vacancies, the pro-slavery party broke into a storm of indignation. They declared that no special election was valid under the organic law; they resolved to disown the authority of the present one, and vowed vengeance against Reeder and all who adhered to him. Without waiting for the new election, the governor, in April, issued his proclamation, summoning the legislature to meet at Pawnee City—a congeries of tents and deals about a hundred miles from the frontier—on the 2d of July.

At the May election, there was little disturbance, and the free-soilers had almost everything their own way; the result being the return of a number of new members, to whom the governor granted certificates. There were now, as we may say, double returns, some apparently valid, others the reverse. No proceedings, however, were founded on this point till the assemblage of the two houses, when, on the third day of the session, a committee made a report respecting disputed elections. Not to go into tiresome minutiæ, the result of the inquiry was, to deprive of his seat one of the members whom the governor had certified in March, and to turn out six members certified under the election in May—the effect of the whole being to restore affairs to nearly that position in which they had been placed by the outrageous intrusion of the Missourians in March. Reeder, it may be presumed, had now an opportunity of repudiating a legislature so vitiated by its own act, but, as previously hinted, though a man of good intentions, he was scarcely fitted for controlling the wild democracy over whom he was called to rule. One of the earliest projects started in the house of representatives was the removal of the seat of legislature to Shawnee Mission, near the borders of Missouri; and a bill to this effect was sent to the governor, who, on the 6th of July, returned it with a message declining to sanction the proposed change. His reason was, that the legislature had transcended its authority in adopting this particular measure; but in making this communication, he distinctly recognised the council and house of representatives as constituting the legislature of the territory of Kansas. As may be supposed, the legislative body paid no attention to the governor's objections, and accordingly removed, on the 16th of July, to a school-house at Shawnee Mission. Still, the governor by messages respecting bills continued to recognise the authority of the legislature, although at the same time, on the 21st of July, he declared that, by the act of removal, the two houses were dissolved, and henceforth he suspended all intercourse with them. We are conscious that these are dry details, but being gathered chiefly from a report of congress respecting the struggle in Kansas, and freed from party exaggerations, they throw a useful light over what has become a question of deep interest connected with the progress of slavery. Up to the point we have reached, the Missouri intruders were clearly in the wrong; the denunciations in their newspapers and speeches at the public meetings were atrocious—language which we could not possibly transfer to these pages. But unfortunately, Reeder, in whose hands was the destiny of Kansas, compromised freedom. His recognition of the corrupt legislature on the 21st of July, was a grave blunder; for in a legal point of view (as we humbly assume), no subsequent repudiation of that body could deprive it of an authority he had already acknowledged. The false position taken by Reeder was greedily seized hold of by his antagonists, who, as an explanation of his conduct, alleged that his preference for Pawnee arose from the fact of his having town-lots to dispose of in that quarter. Whatever truth may be in the scandal circulated on the occasion, there can be no doubt, if we are to believe Phillips, that Shawnee was a much more agreeable place of meeting than Pawnee. 'At the Mission, the legislature were at home; that is, they were nearly so. It was only one mile from the Missouri line, and four miles from Westport. Hacks left the Mission every evening, on the adjournment, taking the members to Westport, and brought them back in the morning. And such splendid junketings and racketings these fellows had! A due supply of whisky was brought in bottles and jugs each morning, in order to keep the legislature *in spirits* during the long summer days.'

Having set to work, the *Bogus* legislature, as this body is usually designated, speedily produced a code of laws connected with 'slave property,' such as the world has not seen for many a day. The following are a few of the penalties: To any person concerned in raising an insurrection among slaves, or free coloured persons—death. To any person who shall entice, decoy, or carry away any slave from the territory—death, or imprisonment for ten years with hard labour. To any person who shall entice or persuade a slave to escape from his master—imprisonment for ten years with hard labour. To any person resisting an officer who attempts to arrest an escaped slave—imprisonment with hard labour for two years. The following sections are too good to abridge:

'If any person print, write, introduce into, or circulate, or cause to be brought into, written, printed, or circulated, or shall knowingly aid or assist in bringing into, printing, publishing, or circulating within this territory, any book, paper, pamphlet, magazine, handbill, or circular containing any statements, arguments, opinions, sentiment, doctrine, advice, or innuendo calculated to produce a disorderly, dangerous, or rebellious disaffection among the slaves of the territory, or to induce such slaves to escape from the service of their masters, or to resist their authority, he shall be guilty of felony, and be punished by imprisonment at hard labour for a term not less than five years. If any free person, by speaking or writing, assert or maintain that persons have not the right to hold slaves in this territory, or shall introduce into this territory, print, publish, write, circulate, or cause to be introduced into the territory, written, printed, published, and circulated in this territory any book, paper, magazine, pamphlet, or circular, containing any denial of the right of persons to hold slaves in this territory, such person shall be deemed guilty of felony, and punished by imprisonment at hard labour for a term of not less than two years. No person who is conscientiously opposed to holding slaves, or who does not admit the right to hold slaves in this territory, shall sit as a juror on the trial of any prosecution for any violation of any of the sections of this act.' This extraordinary code was subscribed by J. H. Stringfellow as Speaker of the house, and Thomas Johnson (the Rev. Tom), President of the council.

The bills passed by the Bogus legislature being, as a matter of form, submitted to Reeder for his sanction, he transmitted a message in reply, stating that his opinion remained unchanged respecting the illegality of that body, but that independently of this fact, he had received official intimation that his functions as governor were withdrawn. The latter part of this reply was probably anticipated; for the legislature had memorialised the president to remove the governor from office; nor can we feel any surprise at his dismissal. Will it be credited—his message just alluded to (August 16) was still addressed 'To the honourable the members of the council and house of representatives of the territory of Kansas'*—an acknowledgment of their authority at variance with his repeated declarations, and greatly calculated to complicate the whole question. Amidst these difficulties, the Bogus legislature obtained an opinion from Judge Lecompte, to the effect, that the bills passed would receive the force of law without the signature of the governor, and so they appear to have actually come into operation.

Reeder, who now withdrew into private life, was replaced by Governor Shannon, who was declared to be 'sound on the goose'—that is, in favour of slavery in the territory—and who, in general character, was no improvement on his predecessor. Indignant at being subjected to laws which they believed to rest on no proper authority, and exposed to personal sufferings from the Missourians, the citizens of Kansas spent the summer of 1855 in a state of extreme agitation. The proper means for redress lay in a calm appeal to congress. They did memorialise that body on the subject of their grievances; and ultimately a committee inquired into and reported on the subject at voluminous length. Without, however, waiting for the action of the supreme government, the citizens of Kansas held mass-meetings denunciatory of their oppressors, and went the extreme length of appointing a governor, C. Robinson, to 'occupy the executive chair of the new state of Kansas.' Under this official took place an entirely new organisation of the territory—alleged by the parties concerned to be exactly in terms of the constitution, but considered by the supreme government as totally irregular and inadmissible. The people in the several districts elected delegates, with perfect seriousness, to constitute a convention, or rival body to the Bogus legislature; and on the meeting of the assembly on the 19th of September at Topeka, a message was delivered from 'Governor Robinson,' which would have done no discredit to the president of the United States.

Looking at the acts and resolutions of the Topeka convention, it was decidedly the better legislature of the two. Considering the nature of its materials, and the circumstances calling it into existence, one cannot but feel amazed at the cool and business-like way in which it set aside the whole proceedings of the Bogus assembly, drew up a constitution, organised committees on education and other affairs, and appointed an executive for the territory. None but an American, however, can do justice to its character. 'This constitutional convention,' says Phillips, 'was by far the most respectable body of men in point of talent, that was convened in Kansas; indeed, it would have compared favourably with legislative bodies anywhere. Talent, and the weak vanity which apes it, were there; true virtue, and a more plastic school of morality; patriotism, and number-one-ism; outside influence, and a lobby; sober, staid, business habits, brandy, temperance, whisky, prayers by the chaplain, profanity, and oyster-suppers. It lacked none of the great essentials.' Taken all in all, it was an honourable body, with the usual sprinkling of skilful politicians, who knew how to indoctrinate an infant community with the principles of party manœuvring.

There were now two rival parliaments in Kansas, each thundering forth laws; but of what use are all the laws in the world, if there is nobody to execute them? Even in despotic countries, it is the people who control the people. The Bogus legislature of Kansas was an exotic, the governor an exotic, and the judges and sheriffs exotics: the people repudiated the whole concern, and defied them. There being, properly speaking, neither law nor government, and outrages being of daily occurrence, the settlers got up secret military organisations, the chief of these being called the Kansas Legion—a kind of *Vehmgericht*, holding mysterious meetings, and the members of which recognised each other by peculiar signs. To counteract these movements, and aid the Bogus legislature, the pro-slavery men held what they called a 'Law and Order Convention' at Leavenworth on the 14th of November; and of this professed auxiliary of the constituted authorities, Governor Shannon was appointed president. From this period may be dated the condition of anarchy in Kansas. At all points, there was open defiance between the two parties. Of the fights, slaughterings, burning of houses, destruction and stealing of property, and personal outrages of every kind, we are fortunately spared from giving any account, as ample details of the atrocities committed by the border ruffians have been made widely known, and more particularly as that greatest atrocity of all, the burning and sacking of the city of Lawrence, in May 1856, must be fresh in every one's recollection. By Mrs Robinson, wife of Governor Robinson, who was carried away a prisoner, a circumstantial and graphic account of the troubles in Kansas has been given to the world.

In July 1856, the Topeka convention was brought to a termination by order of Colonel Sumner, at the head of a troop of dragoons, despatched by the supreme government to suppress the insurrections in the territory. With the interruption of the free-state convention, the seizure of some prisoners, and the occupancy of Kansas by the federal forces, the territory was substantially handed over to the Missourians. How far the president was justified in sending an army into Kansas, has been matter of much angry discussion; his proceedings in this respect, while ostensibly designed to keep the peace, had the effect of vindicating the conduct of the Missourian intruders, and leaving the actual settlers helpless. The subject, it will be recollected, brought congress to a dead-lock at the end of August 1856, when an appropriation for the army required to be voted. On this occasion, the members of the House of Representatives from the free states had it in their power to stop the supplies, and thus withdraw the army from Kansas. This grand chance of historical renown was not embraced. By a majority of 101 to 98, the vote for appropriation was ultimately carried—21 members from free states swelling the majority.

Under Governor Geary, Kansas has latterly been tranquil, and things may be said to be mending. But the laws of the Bogus legislature, which impose and bolster up slavery, remain in force, and whether they will be abolished by local or federal authority, is uncertain. Practically, Kansas is a slave territory, and will to all appearance be a slave state. Some New York newspapers, we observe, are recommending free-state emigrants to proceed to the territory, which presents cheap and fertile lands for settlement; and, considering the mighty stake at issue, we are not surprised that fresh attempts should be made to pour in an independent class of settlers. He would ill understand the nature of the struggle in Kansas, who supposed it to relate solely to the freedom of that territory. No doubt, that was the great and proximate object; but when we say that by making Kansas free, slavery would be checked in its north-western flank, and receive a severe blow throughout its whole system, the character of that desperate life-and-death struggle, which we have faintly portrayed, will perhaps be better understood. That the Americans, to whom this is no local squabble, but a thing of national concern, will sit down quietly with matters as they are, we cannot believe. Indeed, their reputation as a people may be said to be perilled on the result of the question; and we are hardly going beyond the truth in saying, that the world waits with some interest to learn the issue. Possibly, some one on whom has dropped the mantle of Henry Clay, may propose a new Compromise!

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* *Majority Report of Committee of Congress.* March 1856.

In judging of past events in this unhappy territory, a sense of impartiality obliges us to say that all parties were in the wrong. Congress committed in the first place a grievous wrong, by instituting squatter sovereignty in direct opposition to the Missouri Compromise. Pierce seems to have done wrong throughout, in his invariable leaning to the pro-slavery party, and so encouraging their aggressions. Then, as regards the two local parties, wrong was met with wrong, illegality by illegality. The intrusions of the border ruffians were in every point of view iniquitous; but the free-soil settlers, though grossly insulted and oppressed, did surely wrong in inaugurating an illegitimate legislative convention, and in trying to support their plans by secret military organisations. As for Reeder, the central figure in the group of wrong-doers, he, by his incorrigible folly, rendered confusion worse confounded—a fine instance of what mischief may be done by good easy men, when placed in circumstances demanding vigour of character. For all these complications of wrong, of which no one can yet see the end, the more peaceful and honestly disposed immigrants to Kansas paid a heavy penalty. Their sufferings were acute, their losses ruinous. Of the deplorable condition to which their agricultural operations were reduced, we could advance no more convincing proof than that which above all things shocks the sensibility of an American—*white* women were seen labouring in the fields! W. C.

THE FIRST RAGGED SCHOOL.

The Scotch pique themselves a little on having taken the first step in this movement, and have good reason for the self-gratulation. No doubt, so far as the British Isles are concerned, the first of these institutions originated in the north; but few of us are perhaps aware that, in the little town of Weimar, 'where,' as Professor Blackie hath it, 'fair Peace her bloodless victories tells,' such an institution flourished seven-and-thirty years ago.

The life of Frederick Perthes, which has been lately translated, has presented to the English public a picture of German life—a picture of a good man's mind, and of domestic happiness such as has been seldom seen; and among the various subjects of interest treated of in these volumes, public and private, secular and theological, the chapter on the first Ragged School and its founder is one of the most attractive. One thing very notable is, that John Falk, to whom the honour is due of having been the first in this good work, was not a man of any great intellectual power—a large heart, a disinterested, warm, unselfish nature, united with complete devotion to the one object, insured success; though in his literary undertakings he had previously been a butt for the ridicule of his learned countrymen. Falk was a native of West Prussia, and had come to reside in Weimar, when his compassion was excited by the number of children left destitute by the battles of Jena, Lützen, and Leipsic, which had left them fatherless, and who now wandered, like wild beasts of the forest, in the neighbourhood of those scenes of horror. These young savages were the wreck of Napoleon's armies—dark-eyed boys from southern France and sunny Italy, besides a multitude from all the tribes of Germany. Of these, Falk collected more than 300, and took them into his own house, and resolved to devote his life to the task of reclaiming them, and giving them the blessings of education and an honest calling. To do so, besides his own devotion and energy, large funds were necessary; and part of his unpopularity may well be ascribed, not only to his eccentricities, his riding his hobby very hard, but to his being a bold and untiring beggar—a bore, in short—the burden of his song being always 'give, give.' Having himself given his soul and body to the work of saving souls, he could not understand any one being lukewarm in such a cause, or stinting either their labour or their substance. Falk wisely said, speaking of the abuses of the time, 'nor will matters be mended so long as men regard preaching and the hearing of preaching as a Christian act, whereas Christian action is itself the true sermon.' He acted up to this principle, and night and day gave himself to the work. He had much to disappoint, but still more to encourage him, and was determined never to see difficulties. When his house was sold by the proprietor, he naturally found no one very willing to receive him and his 300 children into another: he therefore resolved to build, and to do the whole by the hands of his children; 'so that,' as he said, 'every tile in the roof, every nail in the walls, every lock on the doors, every chair and every table in the rooms, shall be a witness to their industry.'

To any one familiar with our Ragged Schools, the following description, given by Perthes, of the first Ragged School, which he visited in 1822, is very significant: 'About fifty journeymen and apprentices, all of them former inmates of the Ragged Hospital, were working at the new building as masons and carpenters. They were served by boys still in the institution: horrid, cannibal-like faces they all had, with the wolf of the desert unmistakably imprinted on their foreheads. In the expression of many, however, there were traces of a new life; and Falk says it is a real pleasure to see how the claws and the shaggy tufts gradually fall off.'

Falk's work and life-labour was crowned with great success. No doubt, many of his protégés returned to their wild ways, still a much larger number grew up sober and industrious citizens; and many a thriving artisan, in his happy and peaceful home, blessed the memory of his benefactor, who had taught him the first lesson of rectitude and self-respect. Also that has taken place of which he was himself so confident—the idea which possessed him has spread throughout Christian Europe; and though the name of the whimsical John Falk is seldom heard, the desire of his heart is accomplished. Wherever there is want and misery, there also there is a door open for the children of the destitute to learn the great lesson how to live for this world and for the next. And in our days, Industrial Schools have noble lords for their managers, and dainty ladies for their patrons.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—RUBE ROASTED ALIVE.

Doomed beyond doubt—doomed to quick, awful, and certain death was the earless trapper. In five minutes more he must perish. The wall of flame, moving faster than charging cavalry, would soon envelop him, and surer than the carbine's volley or the keen sabre-cut was the death borne forward by that hissing, crackling cohort of fire. Here and there, tall jets, shooting suddenly upward, stalked far in advance of the main line—fiery giants, with red arms stretched forth, as if eager to grasp their victim. Already their hot breath was upon him; another minute, and he must perish!

In a sort of stupor we stood, Garey and I, watching the advance of the flames. Neither of us uttered a word: painful emotions prevented speech. Both our hearts were beating audibly. Mine was bitterly wrong; but I knew that of my companion was enduring the very acme of anguish. I glanced upward to his face: his eye was fixed, and looked steadfastly in one direction—as though it would pierce the sheet of flame, that rolled further and further from where we stood, and nearer to the fatal spot. The expression of that eye was fearful to behold; it was a look of concentrated agony. A single tear had escaped from it, and was rolling down the rude weather-bronzed cheek, little used to such bedewing. The broad chest was heaving in short quick spasms, and it was evident the man was struggling with his breath. He was listening through all this intensity of gaze—listening for the death-shriek of his old comrade—his bosom-friend!

Not long was the suspense; though there was no shriek, no cry of human voice, to indicate the crisis. If any arose, it was not heard by us. It could not have been; it would have been drowned amid the roar of the flames, and the crackling of the hollow culms, whose pent-up gases, set free by the fire, sounded like the continuous rolling of musketry. No death-cry fell upon our ears; but, for all that, we were satisfied that the drama had reached its dénouement: the unfortunate trapper was roasted alive!

Already the flames had passed over the spot where we had last seen him—far beyond—leaving the ground charred and black behind them. Though the smoke hindered our view of the plain, we knew that the climax had passed: the hapless victim had succumbed; and it remained only to look for his bones among the smouldering ashes.

Up to this moment, Garey had stood in a fixed attitude, silent and rigid as a statue. It was not hope that had held him thus spell-bound; he had entertained no such feeling from the first: it was rather a paralysis produced by despair. Now that the crisis was over, and he felt certain that his comrade had perished, his muscles, so long held in tension, suddenly relaxed—his arms fell loosely to his sides—the tears chased each other over his cheeks—his head reclined forward, and in a hoarse, husky voice he exclaimed:

'O! he's rubbed out, rubbed out! We've seed the last o' poor Old Rube!'

My sorrow, though perhaps not so keen as that of my companion, was nevertheless sufficiently painful. I knew the earless trapper well—had been his associate under strange circumstances—amid scenes of danger that draw men's hearts more closely together than any phrases of flattery or compliment. More than once had I seen him tried in the hour of peril; and I knew that, notwithstanding the wildness and eccentricity of his character—of his crimes, I might add—his heart, ill directed by early education, ill guided by after-association, was still rife with many virtues. Many proofs of this could I recall; and I confess that a feeling akin to friendship had grown up between myself and this singular man.

Between Garey and Rube the ties were still stronger. Long and inseparable companionship—years of participation in a life of hardships and perils—like thoughts and habitudes—though perhaps dispositions, age, and characters were a good deal unlike—all had combined to unite the two in a firm bond of friendship. To use their own expressive phrase, they '*froze*' to each other. No wonder then that the look, with which the young trapper regarded that black plain, was one of indescribable anguish.

To his mournful speech, I made no reply. What could I have said? I could not offer consolation. I was weeping as well as he: my silence was but an assent to his sad soliloquy.

After a moment he continued, his voice still tremulous with sorrow: 'Come, commarade! It are no use our cryin like a kupple o' squaws.' With his large finger he dashed the tears aside, as if ashamed of having shed them. 'It are all over now. Let's look arter his bones—that is, if thar's anythin left o' 'em—and gie 'em Christyun burial. Come!'

We caught our horses, and mounting, rode off over the burnt ground. The hoofs of the animals tossed up the smouldering ashes, the hot red cinders causing them to prance. The smoke pained our eyes, and prevented us from seeing far ahead; but we guided ourselves, as well as we could, towards the point where we had last seen the trapper, and where we expected to find his remains.

On nearing the spot, our eyes fell upon a dark mass that lay upon the plain: it was much larger than the body of a man. We could not make out what it was, until within a few feet of it, and even then it was difficult to recognise it as the carcass of a buffalo—though such in reality it was. It was the game which the trapper had killed. It rested as it had fallen—as these animals usually fall—upon the breast, with legs widely spread, and humped shoulders upward. We could perceive that the unfortunate man had nearly finished skinning it—for the hide, parted along the spine, had been removed from the back and sides, and with the fleshy side turned outward, was hanging to the ground, so as to conceal the lower half of the carcass. The whole surface was burnt to the colour of charcoal.

But where were the remains of the hunter? They were nowhere to be seen near the spot. The smoke had cleared away sufficiently to enable us to observe the ground for several hundred yards around us. An object of small dimensions could have been distinguished upon the now bare surface; but none was seen. Yes! a mass lay beside the carcass, which drew our attention for a moment; but on riding up to it we perceived that it was the stomach and intestines of the buffalo, black and half broiled.

Where were the bones of Rube? Had he run away from the spot, and perished elsewhere?

We glanced towards the fire still raging on the distant plain. But no: it was not probable he had gone thence. By the last look we had obtained of him, it did not appear that he was making any effort to escape, and he could scarcely have gone a hundred yards before the flames swept over the spot. How then? Were his bones entirely consumed—calcined—reduced to ashes? The lean, withered, and dried-up body of the old mountain-man favoured such a supposition; and we began seriously to entertain it—for in no other way could we account for the total absence of all remains!

For some moments we sat in our saddles under the influence of strange emotions, but without exchanging a word. We scanned the black surface round and round. The smoke no longer hindered our view of the ground. In the weed-prairies there is no grassy turf; and the dry herbaceous stems of the annuals had burned out, with the rapidity of blazing flax, so that nothing now remained to cause a smoke. The fire was red or dead in an instant. We could see clear enough all that lay over the ground, but nothing like the remains of a human being!

'No,' said Garey, with a long-drawn sigh. 'Poor Old Rube! The cussed thing has burned him to ashes—bones an all! Thur ain't as much o' im left as 'ud fill a tabacca-pipe!'

'What! thur ain't!' replied a voice that caused both of us to start in our saddles, as if it had been Rube's ghost that addressed us—'thur ain't!' repeated the voice, as though it came out of the ground beneath our feet. 'Thur's enough o' Ole Rube left to fill the stummuk o' this hyur buffler; an by the jumpin Geehosophat, a tight fit it ur! Wagh! I'm nigh sufflocated! Gie's yur claws, Bill, an pull me out o' this hyur trap!'

To our astonishment the pendent hide of the buffalo was raised by an invisible hand; and underneath appeared, protruding through a hole in the side of the huge carcass, the unmistakable physiognomy of the earless trapper!

There was something so ludicrous in the apparition, that the sight of it, combined with the joyful reaction of our feelings, sent both Garey and myself into convulsions of laughter. The young trapper lay back in the saddle to give freer play to his lungs; and his loud cachinnations, varied at intervals by savage yells, caused our horses to dance about as if they dreaded an onslaught of Indians!

At first, I could detect a significant smile at the angles formed by Rube's thin lips; but this disappeared as the laughter continued too long for his patience.

'Cuss yur larfin!' cried he at length. 'Kum, Billee, boy! Lay holt hyur, an gi' me a help, or I must wriggle out o' meself. The durned hole ain't es big es twur when I krep in. Durn it, man, make haste! I'm better'n half-baked!'

Garey now leaped from his horse, and taking hold of his comrade by the 'claws,' drew him out of his singular hiding-place. But the appearance of the old trapper, as he stood erect—red, reeking, and greasy—was so supremely ludicrous, that both Garey and I were forced into a fresh fit of laughter, which lasted for several minutes.

Rube, once released from his uncomfortable situation, paid not the slightest attention to our mirth; but stooping down, drew out his long rifle—from where he had secured it under the hanging skin—and after having examined the piece, to see that no harm had come to it, he laid it gently across the horns of the bull. Then taking the 'bowie' from his belt, he quietly proceeded with the skinning of the buffalo, as if nothing had happened to interrupt the operation.

Meanwhile Garey and I had laughed ourselves hoarse, and, moreover, were brimful of curiosity to know the particulars of Rube's adventure. For some time he fought shy of our queries, and pretended to be 'miffed' at the manner in which we had *welcomed him to life* again. It was all pretence, however, as Garey well knew; and the latter having thrust into his comrade's hand the gourd, still containing a small drop of *aguardiente*, soon conciliated him; and after a little more coaxing, he condescended to give us the details of his curious escapade. Thus ran his narration:

'Ee wur both o' yur mighty green to think thet arter fightin grizzly bar an Injun for nigh forty yeern on these hyur parairas, I wur a gwine to be rubbed out by a spunk o' fire like thet. Preehaps 'twur nat'ral enough for the young fellur hyur to take me for a *greenhorn*, seein as he oncest tuk me for a *grizzly*. He, he, he—ho, ho, hoo! I say it wur, an ur nat'ral enough for him to a thort so; but *you* mout a knowd better—*you*, Bill Garey, seein as ee oughter knowd *me*.

'Wal!' continued Rube, after another 'suck' at the gourd, 'when I seed the weeds afire, I knowd it wa'nt no use makin tracks. Preehaps if I'd a spied the thing when the bleeze fust broke out, I mout a run for it, an mout a hed time; but I wur busy skinnin this hyur beest wi' my head clost down to the karkidge, an thurfor didn't see nuthin till I heern the cracklin, an in coorse thur wa'nt the ghost o' a chance to git clur then. I seed thet at the fust glimp.

'I ain't a gwine to say I wa'nt skeart; I wur skeart, an bad skeart too. I thort for a spell, I wur boun to *go under*. Jest then I sot my eyes upon the buffler. I hed got the critter 'bout half-skinned, as ee see; an the idee kim inter my head, I mout crawl somehow under, an pull the hide over me. I tried thet plan fust; but I kudnt git kivered to my saterfaction, an I gin it up. A better idee then kim uppermost, an thet wur to clur out the anymal's inside, an thur *caché*. I reck'n I wa'nt long in cuttin out a wheen o' the buffler's ribs, an tearin out the guts; an I wa'nt long neyther in squezzin my karkidge, feet fo'most, through the hole. I hedn't need to a been long; it wur a close shave an a tight fit, *it* wur. Jest as I hed got my head 'bout half through, the bleeze kim swizzin round, an nearly singed the *ears off o' me*. He, he, he—ho, ho, hoo!'

Garey and I joined in the laugh, at what we both knew to be one of Old Rube's favourite jokes; but Rube himself chuckled so long, that we became impatient to hear the end of his adventure.

'Well!' interrupted Garey, 'consarn your old skin! what next?'

'Wagh!' continued the trapper, 'the way thet bleeze did kum wur a caution to snakes. It roared an screeched, an yowlted an hissed, an the weeds crackled like a million o' wagon-whups! I wur like to be spificated wi' the smoke, but I contruv to pull down the flap o' hide, an thet gin me some relief, though I wur well-nigh choked afore I got the thing fixed. So thur I lay till I heern you fellurs palaverin about a 'bacca-pipe, and thurfor I knowd the hul thing wur over. Wagh!'

And with this exclamation Rube ended his narration, and once more betook himself to the butchering of the already half-roasted buffalo.

Garey and I lent a hand; and having cut out the hump-ribs and other titbits, we returned to the camp. What with broiled hyodons, roast ribs, tongue, and marrow-bones, we had no reason for that night to be dissatisfied with the hospitality of the prairies.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MESA.

After a breakfast of buffalo-flesh, seasoned with splendid appetites, and washed down by a cup of cold water from the arroyo, we 'saddled up,' and headed for a high *butte*, just visible over the plain. My companions knew the landmark well. It lay directly in our route. We should pass near its base, and a ride of ten miles further would bring us to the end of our journey; indeed, the eminence was within sight of the rancheria. From the roof of the alcalde's house, I had frequently noticed it. In clear weather only was it visible, outlined against the horizon, in a north-westerly direction from the village.

Struck with the singularity of this prairie-mound, I had projected a visit to it; but circumstances had prevented me from carrying out my intention. I was now to have the pleasure of a nearer acquaintance with it.

I have called it singular. Most isolated hills are conical, dome-shaped, or ridge-like; this one differed from the usual configuration—hence its singularity. It presented the appearance of a huge box set upon the prairie, not unlike that rare formation, the 'cofre,' which crowns the summit of the mountain Perote. Its sides in the distance appeared perfectly vertical, and its top horizontal as the plain on which it rested.

As we drew nearer, I could perceive by the dark parapet-like band along its crest that it was covered with a growth of timber. This was the more readily observed from contrast with the perpendicular sides, which were almost of a snowy whiteness, on account of the gypsum, chalk, or milky quartz of which the rock was composed. The most peculiar feature of the mound was perhaps its apparently regular form—a perfect parallelopipedon. But it was striking in other respects. Its sides glistened fantastically under the rays of the sun, as though it were studded with windows of glass. This, however, was easily accounted for; and I knew that the sparkling effect was produced by plates of mica or selenite that entered into the composition of the rock. I had seen whole mountains that presented a similar appearance. More than one such exists in the great American Saära, in whose glittering cliffs, viewed from afar, may be found the origin of that wild chimera, the *mountain of gold.*

Although neither a mountain of gold nor silver, the mound in question was an object of rare interest. A very enchanted castle did it appear, and it was difficult to assign its formation to nature alone. Human agency, one could not help fancying, must have had something to do in piling up a structure so regular and compact. But he who has travelled over much of the earth's surface will have met with many 'freaks' of nature, exhibiting like appearance of design, in her world of inorganic matter. It was, in fact, one of those formations of which many are met with in the plateaux-lands of America, known in Spanish phraseology as *mesas.* This name is given to them in allusion to the flat table-like tops, which distinguish them from other elevated summits. Sometimes one of these mesas is found hundreds of miles from any similar eminence; more frequently a number of them stand near each other, like truncated cones—the summits of all being on the same level, and often covered with a vegetation differing materially from that of the surrounding plains. Geologists have affirmed that these table-tops are the ancient level of the plains themselves; and that all around, and intervening between them, has either sunk or submitted to the degradation of water! It is a vague explanation, and scarcely satisfies the speculative mind. The *mesa* of Mexico is still a geological puzzle.

As we approached this singular object, I could not help regarding it with a degree of curiosity. I had seen mesa heights before—in the 'mauvaise terre,' upon the Missouri, in the Navajo country west of the Rocky Mountains, and along the edges of the 'Llano Estacado,' which of itself is a vast mesa. The mound before us was peculiar, from its very regular form, and the sparkling sheen of its cliffs. Its complete isolation, moreover, added to the effect—for no other eminence appeared in sight. The low hills that bordered the Rio Grande could barely be distinguished in the distance.

On getting nearer to it, its character became somewhat altered; the square box-like form appeared less regular, and it was then perceived that the parallelopipedon was not perfect. Slight ledges could be traced traversing the face of its cliffs, and here and there the rectangular lines were broken to the eye. Nature, after all, had not been so exact in her architecture. Yet, with every deduction, it was a singular structure to look upon, not the less so that its summit was inaccessible to human foot. A precipice fifty yards sheer fronted outward on all sides; no one had ever scaled this precipice—so alleged my companions, who were well acquainted with the locality.

We had approached within less than a mile of its base; our conversation had dropped—at least so far as I was concerned; my thoughts were occupied with the mound, and my eyes wandered over its outlines. I was endeavouring to make out the character of the vegetation which seemed to flourish luxuriantly on its summit. The dark foliage was evidently that of some species of acicular trees, perhaps the common red cedar (*Juniperus Virginiana*); but there were others of lighter hue—in all likelihood *piñons,* the pines with edible cones, peculiar to this region. I noticed, also, growing upon the very edge of the cliff, yuccas and aloes, whose radiating blades, stretching out, curved gracefully over the white rock. Forms of cactus, too, were apparent, and several plants of the great *pitahaya* rose high above the cliff, like gigantic candelabra, strange objects in such a situation.

My companions seemed to have no eyes for these rare vegetable beauties; I could hear them at intervals engaged in conversation; but the subject had no reference to the scene, and I paid little attention to what they were saying.

All at once I was startled by the voice of Garey, giving utterance to the emphatic announcement:

'Injuns, by ——!'

'Indians!—where?'

The interrogation escaped my lips. It was half involuntary, and needed no reply. Garey's glance guided me; and, following its direction, I observed a string of horsemen just debouching from behind the mesa, and spurring forward upon the plain.

Both my companions had drawn bridle, and halted. I followed their example; and all three of us sat in our saddles, scanning this sudden apparition of mounted men. A dozen had now cleared themselves from behind the mesa, and were riding towards us.

We were yet nearly a mile from them; and at that distance it is difficult to distinguish a white man from an Indian—I should rather say impossible. Even at half the distance, the oldest prairie-men are sometimes puzzled. The garments are often not very dissimilar, and sun-bronze and dust confound the complexions. Although Garey, at first sight of them, had pronounced the horsemen to be Indians—the most probable supposition under the circumstances—it was but a random conjecture, and for some time we remained in doubt.

'If they're Injuns,' suggested Garey, 'they're Comanche.'

'An if thur Kimanch,' added Rube, with ominous emphasis, 'we've got to fight. If thur Kimanch, thur on the war-trail, an thur'll be mischief in 'em. Wagh! Look to yur flints an primin!'

Rube's counsel was instantly followed. Necessity quickened our precautions. All of us well knew, that, should the approaching horsemen turn out to be Comanches, we had no alternative but fight.

This warlike nation occupies the whole western area of Texas, ranging from the Rio Grande on the south, to the Arkansas on the north. They are to-day, with their kindred tribes, the most powerful Indian alliance on the continent. They affect the ownership of all prairie-land, styling themselves its 'lords,' though their sovereignty towards the north is successfully disputed by the Pawnees, Sioux, Blackfeet, and others as warlike as they. From the earliest times, they have been the *fiend* of the Texan settler; and a detailed account of their forays and pillaging expeditions would fill a score of volumes. But from these they have not gone back unscathed. The reprisals have outnumbered the assaults, and the rifle of the border-ranger has done its work of vengeance. In Mexico they have found less puissant defenders of the hearth and home; and upon the north-eastern provinces of that unhappy country, the Comanches have been for the last half-century in the habit of making an annual foray of war and plunder. In fact, this has become the better part of their subsistence, as they usually return from their rieving expeditions laden with spoil, and carrying with them vast droves of horses, mules, horned cattle, and *captive women.* For a short time, these dusky freebooters were at peace with the Anglo-American colonists of Texas. It was but a temporary armistice, brought about by Houston; but Lamar's administration, of a less pacific character, succeeded, and the settlers were again embroiled with the Indians. War to the knife was declared and carried on; red and white killed each other on sight. When two men met upon the prairie, the colour of the skin determined the relations between them! If they differed in this, they were enemies without parley, and to kill the other was the first thought of each. The *lex talionis* was the custom of the hour.

If the rancour could possibly have been augmented, an incident had just transpired calculated to have that effect. A band of Comanche warriors had offered their services to the commander-in-chief of the American army! They held the following language:

'Let us fight on your side. We have no quarrel with you. You are warriors: we know it, and respect you. We fight against the cowardly Mexicans, who robbed us of our country. We fight for Moctezuma!'

These words, uttered along the whole northern frontier of Mexico, are full of strange import.

The American commander prudently declined the Comanche alliance; and the result was the bitter *triangular* war in which, as already noticed, we were now engaged.

If, then, the approaching horsemen were Indians of the Comanche tribe, Rube's forecast was correct; we had 'got to fight.'

With this understanding, we lost no time in putting ourselves in an attitude of defence. Hastily dismounting, and sheltering our bodies behind those of our horses, we awaited the approach of the band.

CHAPTER XXX.

GUERRILLEROS.

The manœuvre had occupied only a few seconds of time, and the horsemen were yet distant. They had thrown themselves into a formation, and *were riding 'by twos!'*

This movement took us by surprise. The tactics were not Indian: Comanches never march in double file. The horsemen could not be Indians. Who, then?

A sudden hope crossed my mind, that it might be a party of my own people, out in search of me. 'By twos' was our favourite and habitual order of march. But no; the long lances and streaming pennons at once dissipated the hope: there was not a lance in the American army. They could not be 'rangers.'

Comanches on the *war-trail* would have been armed with the lance, but clearly they were *not* Comanches.

'Wagh!' exclaimed Rube, after eyeing them intently. 'Ef thur Injuns, I'm a niggur! Ef thur Injuns, they've got beards an sombrayras, an thet ain't Injun sign nohow. No!' he added, raising his voice, 'thur a gang o' yellur-bellied Mexikins! thet's what they ur.'

All three of us had arrived simultaneously at the same conviction. The horsemen were Mexicans.

It was no great source of rejoicing to know this; and the knowledge produced no change in our defensive attitude. We well knew that a band of Mexicans, armed as these were, could not be other than a hostile party, and bitter too in their hostility. For several weeks past, the *petite guerre* had been waged with dire vengeance. The neutral ground had been the scene of reprisals, and terrible retaliations. On one side, wagon-trains had been attacked and captured, harmless teamsters murdered, or mutilated whilst still alive. I saw one with his arms cut off by the elbow-joints, his heart taken out, and thrust between his teeth! He was dead; but another whom I saw still lived, with the cross deeply gashed upon his breast, upon his brow, on the soles of his feet, and the palms of his hands—a horrid spectacle to look upon!

On the other side, ranchos were ransacked and ruined, villages given to the flames, and men on mere suspición shot down upon the spot or hanged upon the nearest tree! Such a character had the war assumed; and under these circumstances, we knew that the approaching horsemen were our deadly foes.

Beyond a doubt, it was either a scouting-party of Mexican lancers, a *guerrilla*, or a band of robbers. During the war, the two last were nearly synonymous, and the first not unfrequently partook of the character of both.

One thing that puzzled us—what could any of the three be doing in that quarter? The neutral ground—the scene of *guerrilla* operations—lay between the two armies; and we were now far remote from it; in fact, altogether away from the settlements. What could have brought lancers, guerrilleros, or robbers, out upon the plains? There was no *game* in that quarter for any of these gentry—neither an American force to be attacked, nor a traveller to be plundered! My own troop was the out-picket in this direction, and it was full ten miles off. The only thing likely to be met with near the mesa was a war-party of Comanches, and we knew the Mexicans well enough to be convinced that, whether soldiers or freebooters, they were *not* in search of that.

Such reflections, made in double-quick time, occurred to us as we scanned the advancing troop.

Up to this moment, they had ridden directly towards us, and were now nearly in a line between us and the mesa. On getting within about half a mile of our position, they turned sharply toward the west, and rode as if to make round to our rear! This manœuvre of course placed us upon their flank; and now, outlined against the sky, we could distinctly trace their forms and note their habiliments and armour. Nearly all wore broad-brimmed sombreros, with jacket, sash, and calzoneros. They carried lances, lazoes, and carbines or *escopettes*. We could distinguish sabres and *machetés*—the universal weapon of the Mexican ranchero. They could not be drilled troops. Their costumes, as well as a certain irregularity in their manœuvring, forbade this supposition. Their lances, moreover, were borne in all sorts of ways—some couched, some resting in the stirrup and held correctly, while others were carried over the shoulder like a firelock! No, they could not be a troop of regulars. They were either *guerrilleros* or true *salteadores*.

After riding nearly a half-circle round—still keeping at the same distance—the troop suddenly made front towards us, and halted.

We had been puzzled by their going round; we could not divine their object in so doing. It could not be to cut off our retreat. The timber in the back direction was miles off. Had it been near enough, we should certainly have retreated to it long before; but we knew it was too distant. Rube and his old mare would have been overtaken by our well-mounted enemies, long ere we could have gained the woods; we knew this, and therefore did not think of making the attempt. On the other side was the *mesa*, which, by their late movement, had been left open to us. It was but a half-mile off, and perhaps, by making a dash, we might have reached it; but not a tree grew near it—except those on its summit—and its rocky wall apparently offered no advantage to us, any more than the open plain. The enemy seemed to be aware of this, else they would not have ridden round, and thus left the way clear.

Until the moment of their halt, therefore, we remained ignorant of their motive in moving to our rear; *then* it was explained. Their object was evident to all of us: they had halted between us and the sun!

It was a cunning manœuvre, worthy of a war-party of Indians, and told us we had no common enemy to deal with. By approaching us from that direction, they would have a decided advantage: our aim would be spoiled by the sun—now low down upon the horizon, and gleaming right in our eyes. My companions were wroth at the trick that had been thus played so adroitly; though we could not have hindered it even if forewarned.

We were allowed but little time to reflect upon the matter; we saw by the movements of the horsemen that they were preparing to charge. One who appeared to be the leader, mounted upon a larger horse than any of the rest, was addressing them. He rode along the line speaking in a loud tone, and gesticulating violently; he was answered with *vivas*, which we could plainly hear. Every moment, we looked to see them gallop forward.

We knew there was no alternative but fight or surrender, though not one of us entertained an idea of the latter; for myself, I should as soon have thought of turning my pistol to my own head. My uniform, tattered as it was, would easily reveal my character to the enemy; and, if captured, I knew I should be hung, or perhaps, in the absence of trees, shot down upon the spot. My comrades had reasons for knowing that *their* shrift would be equally short: neither thought for a moment of tamely yielding.

'No!' emphatically pronounced Rube, 'this child don't guv in, till he's rubbed out, *he* don't! Tarnation odds too!' he added, looking toward the troop; 'twelve agin three o' us. Durn the odds! I've got clur o' wuss scrapes than 't looks yit, and so 've you, Bill Garey—hain't we, boyee? Durn the odds! let 'em kum on!'

'Ay,' responded Garey, without the slightest show of excitement, 'they'd better not come too near 'ithout tellin thar bisness. I see one saddle that I'll empy the minnit they pass yon weed.' And the speaker indicated a bunch of the *artemisia* plant that grew some two hundred paces off in the direction of the horsemen.

The reckless talk of the old trapper, with the contrasted cool bearing of his younger companion, had fixed my nerves fully. At the first sight of so many adversaries, I was not without some misgivings—in fact, I felt fear. Such odds against us—four to one—was fair cause for apprehension. But it was not my first fight against large odds, both Indian and Mexican; and on that account, I regarded it the less seriously.

Notwithstanding the superiority of our enemy in numbers, I knew we were not so unequal. Unless shot down by the first volley of their carbines and escopettes, each of our three rifles was sure of its man. I had confidence in my own weapon, and a still more perfect reliance on those of my comrades. They were men that never missed—men who never fired a random shot—never drew trigger till their aim was sure. I felt certain, therefore, that should the horsemen charge upon us, only *nine* of the twelve would ever come within pistol-shot, and for that distance we were well prepared. I carried in my belt a six-chambered revolver, one of Colt's best; Garey had another—a present I had made him many years before—and Rube was armed with a pair of stout single barrels, like enough to do good service.

'Seventeen shots! wi' our bowies to fall back upon!' cried Garey triumphantly, as we finished a hasty survey of our arms.

As yet the enemy did not advance; notwithstanding their *vivas* and ejaculations, they appeared to hesitate about charging. Their leader, and another—a lieutenant, perhaps—were still seen riding along their line, as if animating them by further speech, and giving them orders how to act.

Meanwhile, *we* had not been idle; we had *formed square* to receive the charge! You may smile, but such was in reality the case. We had formed square—with our horses! There were four of them, for the wild horse counted one. Garey, who rode like a Comanche, had broken him at our last camp, and he was now perfectly tractable. The shake of a lazo rendered him docile as a lamb.

The four were tied head to head, and croup to croup, and each formed one side of the square. They could not have broken it even under a charge of cavalry; bridles must be untied or cut, and lazoes set loose, before that *formation* could be destroyed!

Within stood we, fronting our foes—the large horse of Garey forming our barricade—our heads and feet alone visible to the enemy.

Thus did we await their onset.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PARLEY.

Another chorus of *vivas* announced that the guerrilla chief had finished his oration, and that the attack was about to be made. We saw him, with one or two others, advance in front of the line, and head towards us, evidently intending to lead the charge.

'Now!' muttered Rube, in a sharp quick tone, 'guns ready, boys! no waste shots, d' yur hear? Lead counts hyur—*it* do. See! By the jumpin Geehosophat, thur a gwine to ride right down! Let 'em kum on, and be ——! Thur's one o' 'em won't git this fur—I mout say two—I mout say three i'deed. Durn the glint o' thet sun! Billee!' he continued, addressing Garey, 'ee 'll shoot fust; yur gun's furrest carry. Plug the big un on the clay-bank hoss. This child's for No. 2 on the gray mustang. An, young fellur! ee'll jest pick off thet niggur on the roan. I know yur wild-cat to the bone, but keep yur eye skinned an yur narves steady, d' yur hear?'

'Yes, yes!' I hurriedly answered, though at the time steadiness of nerves was easier promised than practised. My heart was heaving in quick pulsations at the near prospect of the terrible drama about to be enacted.

At this moment the 'Forward' fell upon our ears, and with the wild notes of the bugle came the words:

'*Andela! anda! Dios y Guadalupe!*'

In an instant, the troop was in motion, and pressed forward, galloping to the charge.

They had not made many stretches before their line became broken, several of the swiftest or most courageous forging ahead of the others.

'The three fo'most!' cried Rube, in the same sharp tone—'the three fo'most! Thet 'll fotch 'em up wi' a roun turn, or this child's mistaken. Now, boyees! mind yur eyes! Steady! Stea-dy—stea-d-y'——

All at once, Rube's muttered cautions, slowly drawled out, were changed to an exclamation that betokened surprise, followed by a long low whistle of the same import! The cause was clear. The guerrilleros had got within three hundred yards of us, still going at a gallop, but we could perceive that their pace slackened as they advanced; already it was more of an amble, than the forward dash of an earnest charge. It was evident they had no stomach for the business—now that they were near enough to see the shining barrels and black hollow tubes of our levelled rifles.

Garey was waiting till the foremost should pass the artemisia-bush; for by that he had long since calculated the point-blank range of his rifle. Another moment, and its crack would have been heard; but the horseman, as if warned by instinct, seemed to divine the exact limit of danger. Before reaching the bush, his heart failed him, and in a wavering, irresolute manner, he drew bridle, and halted! The others, nothing loath, followed his example, until the whole troop had pulled up within less than three hundred yards of the muzzles of our guns!

'Cowed, by ——!' shouted Rube with a derisive laugh. 'Hulloo!' continued he, raising his voice still louder, and addressing the halted line: 'what do ee want anyhow?'

Whether Rube's comical interrogatory was understood or not, it elicited a reply:

'*Amigos! somos amigos!*' (We are friends!) shouted back the leader of the band.

'Friends, be durned!' exclaimed the trapper, who knew enough of Spanish to understand the signification of *amigos*. 'Nice friends you! Wagh! D' yur think to bamfoozle us thet-away? Keep yur distance now!' continued he, raising his rifle in a threatening manner, as a movement was perceptible among the horsemen. 'Keep yur distance, or, by the tarnal airthquake! I'll plug the fust o' ye thet rides within reach. Durn sich friends as you!'

The leader now conversed in a low tone with his lieutenant. Some new design seemed to have been devised between them—and after a while, the former again addressed us; speaking as before in Spanish.

'We are friends!' said he: 'we mean you no harm. To prove it, I will order my men to fall back upon the prairie, while my lieutenant, unarmed, will meet one of you on the neutral ground. Surely, you can have no objection to that?'

'And why such an arrangement?' inquired Garey, who spoke Spanish fluently. 'We want nothing of *you*. What do you want from *us*, with all this durn'd fuss?'

'I have business with you,' replied the Mexican; 'and *you*, sir, in particular. I have something to say to you I don't wish others to hear.'

As he said this, the speaker turned his head, and nodded significantly towards his own following. He was candid with them at least.

This unexpected dialogue took all three of us by surprise. What could the man want with Garey? The latter knew nothing of him—had never, as he declared, 'sot eyes on the niggur before;' although at such a distance—with the sun in his face, and the Mexican's sombrero slouched as it was—Garey might be mistaken. It might be some one whom he had met, though he could not recall him to mind.

After a short consultation, we agreed that Garey should accept the proposal. No evil could result from it—none that we could think of. Garey could easily get back, before any attack could be made upon him, and Rube and I should still be ready to protect him with our pieces. If they meditated treachery, we could not perceive the advantage they were to gain from the proceeding.

The 'parley' therefore was accepted, and the conditions arranged with due caution on our part. The horsemen—with the exception of the leader and his lieutenant—were to ride back to the distance of half a mile; the leader was to remain where he was; and half-way between him and us, Garey and the lieutenant were to meet, both of them on foot and unarmed.

At an order from their chief, the guerrilleros fell back. The lieutenant dismounted, laid his lance along the ground, unbuckled his sabre, drew the pistols from his belt, and placing them beside the lance, advanced towards the appointed spot.

Garey had likewise disarmed himself; and leaving his weapons in charge of Rube and myself, stepped forth to meet the Mexican. In another minute, the two stood face to face, and the 'parley' began.

It was of short duration. The speaking, which appeared to be principally done by the Mexican, was carried on in a low tone; and Rube and I saw that he pointed frequently in our direction, as if we were the subject of his discourse! We observed that his harangue was suddenly interrupted by Garey, who, turning round at the same instant, cried out to us in English:

'Hillow, Rube! what do yer think the skunk wants?'

'How shed I know?' replied Rube. 'What do 'e want?'

'Why, he wants'—Garey's voice rose louder with indignation—'he wants us to give up the *ranger-captain;* an sez, if we do, you an me can go free. Ha, ha, ha!' and the young trapper ended his announcement with a scornful laugh.

Simultaneous with Garey's laugh, I could hear Rube utter a low whistle, and the words 'thet's how the stick floats;' and, then raising his voice, he called out:

'An what answer hev you gin him, Billee?'

'I hain't answered him yet,' was the prompt reply; 'but hyar's the answer!'

I saw Garey's arm raised, with his huge fist clenched; I saw it descend like a trip-hammer upon the face of the Mexican, who with the blow fell heavily to the earth!

WHY DO I WEAR A HAT?

I am a reasonable man, and I wish to know—quite out of course it may be, and without having an appointment, but nevertheless I wish to know—'Why I wear a hat.' Having years ago decided in my own mind that I do not wear it for its utility, certainly not for its beauty, and emphatically not from choice, I simply wish to discover, if possible, *why* I wear it. Why am I, a respectable citizen, a devoted husband, a disinterested adviser, and a kind friend—as the world will discover, when it is too late, from my tombstone—why am I condemned during life to this severe penal servitude, and deprived even of the ameliorating condition—in which light I should look upon a wide-awake—of a ticket-of-leave? A ticket-of-leave! Why, if, in the mistaken supposition that I am beyond the immediate influence of Printing-house Square, I perambulate the streets of a continental city in any head-tire less excruciating than this, the *Times* dedicates its leading columns to a denunciation of the atrocity; whilst if, similarly attired, I attempt the streets of our own metropolis, the derisive vulgarity of misguided youth unweariedly pursues me. Why, I ask, on the authority of an independent elector, and one having a stake in the country, why is this?—— What *is* a hat? Apart from its being the gross caricature of an inverted flower-pot, and the most perfect conception of ugliness possible, is it possessed of some subtile and mysterious quality, of which I am unhappily ignorant, but which to the educated eye presents it as an object of beauty and symmetry? Is it—as the universal sympathy of the nineteenth century would almost persuade me—in any way connected with the steam-engine, or the printing-press, or trial by jury, or habeas corpus, or parliamentary reform, or, in fact, the British constitution? Is the wearing of it insisted upon, under the severest penalties, by any particular act of parliament, and, though I know it not, one of the most material constituents of our national prosperity?

Influenced by the prevailing weakness of the age, I should be more reconciled to it could I discover any precedent for the custom, or that it had the sanction of antiquity to recommend it; but I cannot. My ancestors, however preposterous they may have been in the fashion of their boots, however capricious in the cut of their trunk-hose and doublets, or however eccentric in their conceptions of periwigs, were never, that I can discover, guilty of wearing anything so monstrous as a modern hat. Even my remote ancestors, the ancient Britons, though particular to a fault in the illustration of their stomachs, and somewhat savage, I must confess, in many respects, were never so lost to everything human as this. I am not even aware that any of our national statues are accommodated with this article of costume.

In the days subsequent to those of my illuminated ancestors, I find that although hats were worn, they were generally of a fanciful and picturesque construction, as witness what Stubbs in the year 1585 says on the subject: 'Sometimes,' he says, 'they use them sharpe on the crowne, peaking up like the spire or shaft of a steeple, standing a quarter of a yarde above the crowne of their heddes, some more, some less, as please the phantasies of their inconstante mindes. Othersome be flatt and broade on the crowne, like the battlements of a house. Another sorte have rounde crownes, sometimes with one kinde of bande, sometimes with another; now black, now white, now russed, now redde, now green, now yellow, now this, now that, never content with one colour or fashion two daies on end. And as the fashions be rare and strange, so is the stuffe whereof their hattes are maide divers also; for some are silke, some of velvet, some of taffetie, some of sarsnet, some of wool, and, which is most curious, some of certaine kinde of fine haire; these they call bever hattes, of xx., xxx., or xl. sh. price.'

Now, so strong are my individual feelings upon the subject, that I conscientiously declare I would rather wear a sarsnet hat a quarter of a yard high, with a yellow riband round it, as my respectable progenitors, on the authority of Stubbs, did 200 years ago, than be attired in the glossiest, lightest, most flexible, and best ventilated gossamer of the present day; and this although I commenced this paper by stating—and I stick to it—that I am a reasonable man! My great-grandfather, who flourished 150 years ago, wore a three-cornered cocked-hat, and looked like a gentleman. If he were to meet the present writer staggering under a head-dress of this period, he would kick him—and very properly—for disgracing the family: as the custom was in his day, he would probably swear at him too!

But putting my immediate ancestors out of the question, can we for a moment imagine anything heroic, anything noble or worthy of historical record, to be associated with the idea of a hat? What would be the fate, for example, of our ideal portrait of the Great Napoleon, as he stands with folded arms on a rocky promontory of his island-prison, gazing over the great Atlantic waste, to where—the theatre of all his glory, the centre of all his fading hopes—'La Belle France,' lies far away, and lost to him, in the distance? What would become of this portrait, I say, were a modern hat substituted for the immortal *chapeau* of that immortal man? Simply and fatally, that, by virtue of the change, we should recognise in the person of the great commander, a possible Smith, a probable Brown, a hypothetical Jones, a supposititious Robinson, brooding, it might be, over the flatness of cotton, or the tightness of the money-market.

Let the most enthusiastic admirer of Cromwell once place a hat upon the head of that remarkable man, and he becomes a huge, fat, vulgar, frouzy brewer instantly. So deeply am I impressed with the terrible effects arising from this article of dress, that I fear the grand expanse of forehead, the colossal brow of the immortal Shakspeare himself, would not be proof against so vile a covering—so terrible a leveller is a hat.

That the fact of its existence would have altered the current of history in the case of the tyrant Gessler, so that the toxophilitic proficiency of William Tell would have been known only to his friends, I have little doubt, so utterly absurd would it have been to anticipate obeisance to a—hat!

If it be true that no man can be a hero to his valet, how infinitely more certain is it that no man can be a hero in a hat!

But I feel that it is quite impossible to furnish even the most concise epitome of my hatred to hats within the limits of a column. If I ever do—and I confess I sometimes do—yearn for the faculty of authorship, it is primarily that I may devote three volumes of the most brilliant writing to a denunciation of this most atrocious slavery, so that my name may go down to posterity—in conjunction with that of Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe—as one of the greatest reformers of my age.

Pending the publication of this—I may say prophetically—celebrated work, I will, for present purposes, call upon all true-hearted Britons, as they value liberty, and never, never, never will be slaves, to shake off this vile yoke, and assert their native dignity—in night-caps, if necessary—or, as the only alternative, to furnish me with a satisfactory reason *why* I wear a hat.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The first month of the new year has been marked by a fair amount of activity: publishers of good books say they 'mustn't complain;' philosophers are all but unanimous in thinking they have made a good start; and artists are worked up to different degrees of enthusiasm by the exhibition—at last—of some of Turner's pictures in Marlborough House, and by the fact, that government is building a gallery to receive the valuable collection of paintings offered to the nation by Mr Sheepshanks. This gallery forms part of the erections in which the Department of Science and Art is now lodged at South Kensington, with space enough for museums and offices, and all the appliances needful for its national task—art-education. While in these respects the department is acknowledged to be effective, opinions are very much at variance as to its locality—one party declares it to be too far west; another maintains that fifty years hence it will be central. At anyrate, it is too far west at present to be used as a means of study and reference by working-people, most of whom dwell in the east, and would naturally be unwilling to lose half their day in the walk from Spitalfields to Kensington and back. Meanwhile the tendency to migrate westward appears to grow stronger. The Royal Society are busy removing their library from the Strand to Burlington House; a commission is considering the question as to site for a new National Gallery; and everything foretokens that the east will be left still further behind than at present.

The Privy Council of Education are about to establish a museum in the same quarter for educational purposes. It will comprise the several objects and materials exhibited by the Society of Arts in St Martin's Hall in 1854, with plans and models of schools, of fittings and apparatus, desks, seats, books, &c., &c. This is a most praiseworthy project, and we hope it will be properly appreciated and resorted to by those engaged in the work of education in all parts of the kingdom.—We have satisfactory information from Woolwich as to what can be done by real study and honest examinations: the officers of engineers who obtained their commissions by passing their examination successfully, though looked coldly on at first as interlopers, and regarded as 'persons,' have proved themselves remarkably apt and able in their duties, and in their persevering endeavours to master all the details. Some have already suggested improvements in engineering appliances; and there seems good reason to believe, that henceforth officers thoroughly acquainted with their profession will be the rule, and not the exception.—And attention has been called to the fact, that in knowledge of another sort—namely, of living Eastern languages—England is more backward than she ought to be; and measures are to be taken to insure that our military and civil officers, from Constantinople to Canton, shall be able to confer with the natives without the medium—too often a fatal one—of an interpreter. In the present state of affairs in Persia and China, this question becomes of much importance. —A proposal has been made which promises well for another sort of education: to establish Industrial Schools, each of which shall comprise a 'training family'—girls to be entered and instructed, during good-behaviour, in all that appertains to domestic economy and household duties. Will it not be a surprise if we have troops of young women skilled in the neglected accomplishments of roasting mutton, boiling potatoes, and making a shirt!

The Society of Arts announce that their Ninth Exhibition of Inventions will open on the 23d of March: another opportunity for the usefully ingenious to demonstrate their capabilities. Among the papers read at the evening meetings of the society, one on the Natural Resources of British Honduras by the colonial Chief-justice Temple, made known many new particulars concerning the colony as to climate and productions, from which we gather that scarcity of mahogany is not to be feared for a long time to come.

Talking about Honduras reminds us of a new yam, as it is called, which has been sent from Mexico to the Académie at Paris. It is of prodigious size—2 mètres 51 centimètres long, 89 centimètres circumference, and weighs 86 kilogrammes. Some of the academicians say it is rather a rhizome than a root; not a yam, but a hitherto undetermined vegetable, perhaps a *dioscorea*—a question to be settled by botanists. In Mexico, as we are informed, it is not at all uncommon for the roots to grow to a length of four mètres. They are a palatable article of food, notwithstanding their size.

Mr Palliser's project for exploring the Saskatchewan and the passes of the Rocky Mountains, is recommended by the Geographical Society. If we are to purge our towns and counties of rogues and desperadoes by transporting them to Vancouver's Island, a practicable route across the continent of America to the north-west becomes a desideratum. And among the subjects brought forward at recent meetings of the Society are—the desirability of constructing a railway from the north-west coast to Hudson's Bay—a scheme for an exploration of the Orinoco, and on the progress of the North Australian exploring expedition. The last published volume of the Society's *Journal* contains numerous interesting papers: Markham, On the Sources of the Purus; Cadell, On the Navigation of the Murray; Bollaert, On Coal in Chile, &c. And as regards Africa, Dr Livingstone's discoveries are to be followed up, and another expedition is to be sent to penetrate the interior up the Quorra and Tchadda. Apropos of Dr Livingstone: Edinburgh acknowledges his merits by conferring on him the freedom of the city; Glasgow has *offered* this honour; and in London a testimonial, set on foot by an animated public meeting at the Mansion-house, is growing into a solid subscription. In a testimonial so well deserved, all classes may cheerfully unite.

The Hakluyt Society are continuing their useful publications, chiefly of early voyages and travels never before published, reprints of old editions; and in this way a series of works, hitherto inaccessible, is brought within reach of the scientific reader. *Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century* is the title of the last; and among volumes forthcoming we find, *India in the Fifteenth Century*, and, translated by Admiral Smyth, *The Travels of Girolamo Benzoni, in America, in* 1542–56. A subscription of a guinea a year entitles the members to all the works published.—Notice has at times been taken of specimens of graphic or hieroglyphic writing brought from Mexico, of a date subsequent to the Spanish conquest: Mr Squier has read a paper thereupon before the Royal Society of Literature, in which he shews that these specimens are writings prepared by the earliest Spanish missionaries to impart a knowledge of the Christian faith to the Mexicans.—And while on the subject of books, we may mention here a work in two volumes, published at Paris by M. E. Bonnemère—*Histoire des Paysans*, in which the author, tracing the history of the peasantry, shews how the growth of political liberty has gradually ameliorated their condition, and how certain remarkable epochs form, as it were, a measure of their advance. The period embraced is from 1200 to 1850; but in the introduction, the history is carried back to the fiftieth year before the present era.

Since the publication of Professor J. D. Forbes's theory of the phenomena of glaciers, a notion had prevailed that the question was settled; but Messrs Tyndall and Huxley, in a paper read before the Royal Society, illustrated by ingenious experiments, make it evident that there is much to be said on the question from another point of view. Demurring to the viscous theory of glacier motion, they shew that the same effects are producible by another and a different cause—a mechanical one. The operation of this is favoured by a certain plasticity of the ice, by reason of which it takes readily new forms under great pressure, as was demonstrated by experiment. A sphere of ice was compressed into a perfect lens; a small flat slab into a half-circle; and from a hemispherical mass, a complete basin was produced—all retaining their shape solid enough to be freely handled, till they melted away in the warmth of the room. Dr Tyndall was led to the views, here sketched in merest outline, by his researches into the origin of slaty cleavage; and having confirmed them by a visit to the Alps of Switzerland and the Tyrol, he has, conjointly with Mr Huxley, submitted them to the judgment of scientific men in the way above mentioned, and by a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution.

A paper 'On Some of the Products of the Destructive Distillation of Boghead Coal,' by Mr Williams of Glasgow, read also before the Royal Society, is interesting as affording another instance of the advantages derived by industry from refined science. The products in the present case are numerous, and such as will become available in the useful arts, similarly with benzole, paraffine, &c. After the reading of the paper, the president of the Chemical Society mentioned, as an example of the progress made in researches of the kind under notice, that aniline—a compound of the benzole series—which a short time since could only be obtained in what was considered a large quantity—a few ounces at a time—is now obtained at the rate of thirty-five gallons a day, and used in the dyeing of silk. New applications of benzole are also discovered, some of them available in domestic economy. It is preferable, as we hear, to turpentine for cleansing silk and woollen from spots of grease.

We noticed in a recent *Month*, improvements in the manufacture of sugar on the great beet-root farms in Picardy, and we now call attention to the operations carried on at Messrs Dray & Co.'s beet-root farm at Farningham, near Dartford, Kent. Large quantities of the root are grown, subjected to distillation, and afterwards used to fatten sheep and cattle. To three-quarters of a ton of beets, which are sliced lengthwise by machinery in an hour, 800 gallons of wort prepared by maceration of beets to start with, are poured on, a quart of sulphuric acid is added, and at the end of twenty-four hours, the slices are ready for distillation. Placed in iron cylinders divided into compartments, each compartment is drawn upon successively, so that there is a continuous flow of spirit until the end of the process. The spirit is said to resemble small-still whisky; and under proper treatment, becomes what is called a neutral spirit, useful for many industrial purposes. So much success has attended the manufacture of beet-root spirit in the district around St Quentin and Valenciennes, that 17,000 bullocks and 140,000 sheep are now fattened annually, where the number used to be 11,000 of the one and 70,000 of the other; and more corn is grown because of the increased supply of manure. It remains to be seen whether the like prosperity will attend the endeavours in Kent.

There is talk of a limited liability company to work Dr Normandy's patent process for distilling fresh aërated water from sea-water; to be applied, we presume, in places where natural fresh water is not to be had. The efficiency of the process was tested at

Heligoland, as government had an apparatus fixed to supply the German Legion when camped on the islet.—A communication addressed to the Académie at Paris shews oxygenated water to have a remarkable curative effect in cases of cholera—a fact said to be confirmatory of the evidence that absence of ozone from the atmosphere is a cause of cholera. The oxygenated water makes up the deficiency.—Messrs Schroeder and Dusch make it apparent that meat may be kept fresh for a long time in filtered air. The filtration is effected by very simple means—namely, panels of cotton wadding to the safe or closet in which the meat is hung. Would not this method of delaying putrefaction come within the conditions prescribed by the Society of Arts in their last prize-list? Butchers' meat has risen to so extremely high a price in Paris, that there has been some talk of the imperial government undertaking to sell preserved fresh meat at a reasonable rate.

The inquiry for fibrous and oil-producing plants for manufacturing purposes, continues: Chief-justice Temple says we are as yet very imperfectly acquainted with the oleaginous products of Honduras, and Dr Royle repeats his testimony in favour of India as an exhaustless field of vegetable fibre. This leads us to notice an improvement in the flax-trade—Macbride's scutching-machine—which cleans more than 500 pounds of fibre in ten hours, and when driven to the utmost, will turn out 900 pounds in the same space of time. Compared with hand-labour, there is a gain of more than half in favour of the machine—at least, so say the initiated.—The United States government is sending an expedition to different places within the tropics to collect cuttings of sugar-cane, to renew the exhausted stocks in the southern states.—A bronze halfpenny, the first coinage in that metal, has just been struck for circulation in Nova Scotia.—Austria is about to send out her first naval exploring expedition round the world: Dr Scherzer of Vienna to be chief naturalist.—Clifford's plan of lowering boats from ships under-way, or steamers at full speed, continues to bear the severest tests; as shewn by a recent trial, in presence of the port-admiral and other authorities, at Portsmouth, it is equally available with a light skiff or a heavy boat. It is a mechanical contrivance which every ship-owner should at once adopt.—An American invention, patented by Mr Reader, has been submitted to the Admiralty and the leading scientific societies. It is a 'Mariner's Time Compass,' which he describes as 'a combination of a universal dial and chronometer, constructed to take any horizontal bearing in any latitude, at any hour of the day. It is also intended to solve practically those problems which can be solved by an armillary sphere, or by spherical trigonometry—and to supply the place of the magnetic needle.' To describe the instrument without a diagram, would not be easy; in few words, it has a brass ring, a dial and compass working on gymbals; and wire standards which throw a shadow. 'For taking a horizontal bearing in any latitude,' says Mr Reader, 'let the hour be what it may, it is only necessary to bring the hand, with its two upright wire-standards, to the true apparent time: the instrument then being turned till the hand points to the sun, gives the course. This hand is provided with a lens fixed in the centre, which takes the place of the gnomon of the universal dial, and is carried round by the chronometer once in twenty-four hours—the focus from which being thrown on the equatorial circle, gives the true time.' The instrument will also shew the apparent time—the altitude and latitude—the course and longitude by night when the moon is visible or the planets—and by proper adjustment, the figures 12 and 12 on the dial may be made to stand true north and south, and thus shew the error or variation of the compass-needle. Although these particulars will be best understood by mariners, we are glad to assist in making generally known an instrument which is likely to be of real use in navigation. It has been tried in the Collins line of mail-steamers and on board other vessels with favourable results.

M. Porro, whose name we have more than once mentioned in connection with physical science, has invented a telescope which is as compact and portable as an eye-glass, and is found to be admirably adapted for cavalry officers and others who have to reconnoitre the distance from horseback. It consists of three prisms, of which one forms the object-glass, the second the eye-piece, and the third gives the image its true position. The cost is somewhat high, 150 francs, which is occasioned by the fact, that if the prisms are out of plane by ever so small an amount, they have to be rejected.—Dr Bagot, thinking it of importance that more should be known of what goes on in the upper strata of the atmosphere, has exhibited to the Royal Dublin Society an instrument which he calls a nepheloscope for measuring the movement of the highest clouds.—A patent has been taken out to render wood fire-proof: the process is to steep the planks in a solution of phosphate of ammonia, and subject them afterwards to heat.—The Damascus Steel Manufacturing Company have patented a method for converting wrought iron into cast steel.—A remarkable discovery of iron ore has been made at Seend, Wiltshire, near the borders of the New Forest. It is a ferruginous sandstone, containing in some instances fifty per cent. of iron. Already, about 5000 tons have been dug out, and sent to Wales to be smelted.

Mr Mayall's new material for photographic pictures, noticed some time ago, appears now to be improved to as near perfection as may well be. The glare of a metallic plate is objectionable in photography, and paper, though free from glare, is also objectionable from its absorption of the middle tints, owing to its fibrous nature. By a combination of sulphate of barytes with albumen, Mr Mayall produces a substance resembling ivory, which gives the surface required, and capability of finish. On this, middle tints and distances come out in perfection, and a portrait can be made ready in a couple of days. The progress made in photography during the past twelvemonth may be seen to admiration in the Photographic Society's Exhibition now open in Pall Mall.

We may just mention here a case of poisoning in food, the publicity of which may do some service. It occurred near Edinburgh in 1856—the great poisoning year—and we see it stated at length in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* for May. The case we refer to is that of Mr H. Stephens, author of the well-known work, the *Book of the Farm*. One day in March, Mr Stephens ate for his dinner a broiled American partridge, which had been purchased from a poulterer. This bird, though called a partridge, resembles a grouse, and is the ruffed grouse of the United States (*Bonasia Umbellus*). Shortly after dinner, Mr Stephens felt exceedingly uneasy; it seemed as if his whole person was under an oppressive weight. This was followed by loss of sight, and a sensation of intense cold. Then he felt an inclination to vomit, and immediately afterwards dropped almost senseless on the floor. A medical practitioner who was sent for, pronounced Mr Stephens to be poisoned; and to restore action to the feeble system, administered brandy. Some repeated doses of warm water and brandy produced vomiting. Put to bed, Mr Stephens was kept warm by hot-water bottles and other means. Next day, he began to recover, and finally got well. On examination, it was found that the partridge, as is not uncommon with this imported American bird, was in a poisonous condition. The animal is believed to feed on plants of a deleterious kind; and if kept long, the poison from the food in the crop permeates the flesh.

GREEK, ROMAN, AND NEGRO LONGEVITY.

Zeno is stated to have lived 102 years; Democritus, 104; Pyrrho, 90; Diogenes, 90; Hippocrates, 99; Plato, 82; Isocrates, 98; Gorgias, the master of Isocrates, 107. But for the cup of hemlock, and the sword of the Roman soldier, the 70 years of Socrates, and the 75 years of Archimedes, might well have reached the same high class of longevities. The old age of Sophocles, 90 years, is associated with the touching anecdote of his recitation of verses from the Œdipus Coloneus, in proof of his then sanity of mind. The lofty lyric genius of Pindar was not lost to his country until he had reached 84 years. Simonides wore his elegiac laurels to the age of 90. . . . The census instituted by Vespasian furnishes some results as to longevity singular enough to suggest doubts of their entire accuracy. The instances given by Pliny are taken exclusively from the region between the Appenines and the Po; and upon the record of this census—which he himself calls *res confessa*—he enumerates 54 persons who had reached the age of 100, 14 of 110 years, 2 of 125, 4 of 130, 4 of 135, and 3 of 140 years. In the single town of Valciatium, near Placentia, he mentions 6 persons of 110, 4 of 120, 1 of 150 years. These round numbers are somewhat suspicious as to the reality of the ages in question; and the whole statement, derived from a district by no means noted for its salubrity, is so much in excess of any similar record in other countries, that we cannot but hesitate in admitting it. . . . . In 1840, when the population of the United States was about 17 millions, of which 2½ millions in round numbers were negroes, the census gave 791 as the number of *whites* above 100; while of *slaves*, the number of those above 100 is registered as 1333, of *free negroes*, as 647. In 1855, we find from the census, that 43 persons died in the United States above 100; the oldest white male at 110, the oldest white female, 109; the oldest negro man, 130, the oldest negro woman, 120, both slaves. From Professor Tucker's analysis of the American census from 1790 to 1840, published a year ago, we derive the strange result, if true, that the chances of living above 100 are 13 times as great among slaves, and 40 times as great in free negroes, as in the white population of the country.—*Edin. Review.*

THE VICTORIA BRIDGE.

This bridge, which we need hardly say crosses the St Lawrence a short way above Montreal, will be one of the grand wonders of the wonders of the world. It was commenced in July 1854, and is under contract to be completed in 1860. The total estimated cost was originally about 7,000,000 dollars; but recently the plans have been amended so as to reduce it to a little over 6,000,000 dollars. The extreme length of the bridge, including the abutment at each side, will be 7000 feet, or rather more than a mile and a quarter. There will be twenty-six piers of solid masonry supporting the iron superstructure of the bridge. The centre span will be 350 feet, and the other spans each 242 feet wide. The height of the centre of the bridge is to be 60 feet above the level of the water. The weight of iron in the tubes will be 8000 tons, and the contents of the masonry, 30,000,000 cubic feet, when the whole structure is finished. The famous Britannia Tubular Suspension Bridge crossing the Menai Strait, and now one of the curiosities of the world, will scarcely be a circumstance to it. Including the embankments at each side, the total length of the bridge from river bank to river bank will be 10,274 feet, or nearly two miles. The abutment of the bridge at which the landing from the steamers was made, is nearly completed. It consists of an immense mass of masonry, of such apparent strength as to strike the beholder with the impression that it is capable of resisting any possible amount of pressure by the heavy piles of ice that come down the St Lawrence. Experience alone, however, can fully test its capabilities in this respect. Nine piers of the bridge are now completed, but as yet unconnected by any roadway. They present a plain surface on the two sides and lower end; the side facing the current being of a wedge shape, in order to break and turn aside the blocks of ice, to provide against whose destructive power has been the great engineering difficulty of the enterprise.—*Newspaper Correspondent.*

THE ANGELS.

PARAPHRASED FROM THE GERMAN.

Now list while I tell thee, my darling child,
How lovely and fair are the angels mild!
They have radiant faces more purely bright
Than the heavens and earth in soft spring light;
They have eyes so blue, and serenely fair,
And eternal flowers in their golden hair,
And their flashing wings which to thee would seem
Of silvery moonshine, a dazzling beam,
The angels wave so stately and light,
From rosy morn till the dewy night.

Now list while I tell thee, my darling child,
How softly and light soar the angels mild!
As lightly as flutters from heaven the snow,
As soft as o'er earth the pale moonbeams glow,
As light as the mist in silver wreath curls,
As soft as the bud into blossom unfurls,
As lightly as leaflet is borne from the tree,
As soft as the lightfall o'er land and o'er sea,
Thus lightly and softly, my darling child,
On pinion of air soar the angels mild!

Now list while I tell thee, my darling child,
Where dwell the angels so lovely and mild!
Where the voice of the poor is heard in need,
There haste the angels with manna to feed;
Where o'er her sick babe the young mother weeps,
Bright angels flock nigh, and the little one sleeps;
Where the worn and weary faint and fear,
Where trembles a soul, where falls a tear,
There swiftly speed, my darling child,
On ministering wing the angels mild!

And wouldst thou, my child, the angels view?
That on this earth thou canst not do;
But if holy and pure thou livest here,
A beauteous angel will ever be near;
And in that hour when realms of light
Refulgent, dawn o'er the dimming sight,
Thou 'lt see them then, as they beckon aloft,
Expand thy budding wings so soft!
And lo! in Elysium, my darling child,
Thou wilt be triumphant an angel mild! L. M. L.

RUSKIN TURNETH ROUND ON TURNER.

The moment he tried to idealise, and introduced his principles for the sake of display, they led him into depths of error proportioned exactly to the extent of effort. His painting, at this period, of an English town, or a Welsh hill, was magnificent and faultless; but all his idealism, mythology, romance, and composition in general, were more or less wrong. He erred through all, and by reason of all—his great discoveries. He erred in *colour;* because, not content with discerning the brilliancy of nature, he tried to enhance that brilliancy by every species of coloured accessory, until colour was killed by colour, and the blue skies and snowy mountains, which would have been lovely by themselves, were confused and vulgarised by the blue dresses and white complexions of the foreground figures. He erred in *refinement*, because, not content with the natural tenderness of tender things, he strove to idealise even strong things into gentleness, until his architecture became transparent, and his ground ghostly; and he erred finally, and chiefly, in *quantity*, because, in his enthusiastic perception of the fulness of nature, he did not allow for the narrowness of the human heart; he saw, indeed, that there were no limits to creation, but forgot that there were many to reception: he thus spoiled his most careful works by the very richness of invention they contained, and concentrated the materials of twenty noble pictures into a single failure. —*Ruskin's Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House.*

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RELIGION, LOVE, AND MARRIAGE IN ITALY.

One day so closely resembles another in the general course of existence in the provincial towns of Central and Southern Italy, that it would be difficult, with any regard to truth, to throw much more diversity into the description of twelve months than of twelve hours; the only variation of any importance being connected with the seasons when the Opera is open, for which the majority of the population retain the absorbing attachment that grave thinkers, like the good and enlightened Ganganelli, so far back as a century ago, lamented as the bane of the inhabitants of the Marche. On this, however, as on a variety of other matters, his successors held different opinions down to Clement XIV.; and by their encouragement to the taste for theatrical performances, fostered the levity which that pontiff in his correspondence so much deplores—well content to see the eagerness, the interest, the hopes which in other countries men are *taught* it is more fitting to bestow on questions of science, politics, and religion, centre among their own subjects on the *trilli* of a prima donna, or the legs of a *ballerina*.

That which, perhaps, out of a hundred other traits, most forcibly attracted my notice, as evincing the most striking contrast to English manners—for be it remembered, I never set up for a cosmopolite, but, conscious of my inherent insularities, measure everything by the gauge of English opinion and English custom—was the complete absence, in their familiar conversation, of all allusion to a topic which, more or less, for better or for worse, is always a predominant one with us.

It was some time before I could assure myself that the silence connected with religion, in all save its most material forms—such as just saying: 'I am going to mass;' or, 'How tiresome! to-morrow is a vigil, and we must eat *maigre!*'—did not arise from reserve at the presence of a heretic; but at length I was convinced that there was no design in this avoidance of themes which, in England, you can scarcely take up a magazine, or a fashionable novel, or pay a morning visit, or go twenty miles in a railway, without encountering. Instead of interweaving their conversation with phrases akin to those which, either from piety, or habit, or, alas! from cant, are so frequently upon the lips of English people, the Italians seemed anxious to put aside whatever tended to awaken such unpleasant considerations as the uncertainty of life or a preparation for eternity; casting all their cares in this last particular—when they considered it worth caring for—upon their priests, with a confidence it was marvellous to witness.

Never, certainly, judging them as a totality, was there a set of people who 'thought less about thinking, or felt less about feeling;' who went through life less troubled with self-questionings of what they lived for, or whether they lived well; or who, dissatisfied and listless as they might be in their present condition, manifested less inclination to dwell upon the hopes and prospects of futurity. Yet, although thus opposed to any serious reference to sacred things, they resemble the French in the levity with which they will introduce them on the most unseasonable occasions, without any apparent consciousness of impropriety. Nay, there was thought to be nothing profane in a *tableau vivant*, which I heard them talking of, as having recently taken place at the house of one of the noble ladies of the society; the subject—a Descent from the Cross, or the Entombment, I know not which—impersonated from an ancient picture. Suffice it to say, that our Saviour was represented by a remarkably handsome young student from Bologna, whose style of features and long brown hair resembled the type which all painters have more or less followed in their pictures of Christ; and that the Magdalen was the lady of the house, a Florentine contessa, whose Rubens-like colouring and billowy golden hair had first suggested her fitness to sustain a part, for which her detractors, of course, added she was also in other respects well qualified.

The sentiments I expressed at this exhibition evidently caused surprise, as, in fact, was invariably the case at the manifestation of any religious tendency on my part. I think I have before mentioned that *Protestant* amongst these worthy people was but a polite term for Atheist; as in the case of the Marchesa Silvia, when I offered her one of our prayer-books, the superstitious shrink from being enlightened upon our tenets; while to the unbelieving, they are a matter of profound indifference, respecting which they never dream of asking information. And under these two heads, with but rare exceptions, and a vast and increasing preponderance to the side of infidelity, it is no want of charity to say that the population of the Pontifical States may be classified.

Second only to the avoidance of all serious subjects, that which most struck me was their complete indifference to literature, even in its simplest form. Unknown to them is the veneration we cherish for the popular authors of the day, our familiar reference to their works, our adoption of their sayings. During childhood, they have no story-books to fill their minds with images which, converted into pleasant memories in advancing life, it is like letting sunshine upon the soul to muse over. Their ripening years see them with the same void; for, however it may be objected that a nation possessing Dante and Tasso, Filicaja and Alfieri, Monti and Leopardi, should never be taxed with the barrenness of its literature, I reply that I am here speaking of the requirements of the generality of the masses, for whose capacity such authors range too high. The only attempts to supply this deficiency which the present time has witnessed, or rather, it should be said, the jealous surveillance over the press has permitted, have been half-a-dozen historical novels from the pens of Azeglio, Manzoni, Guerrazzi, and one or two others. But as yet the experiment has failed: you may say of the Italians as of a backward child, 'they do not love their book!' Reading is looked upon as inseparable from study; as a monopoly in the hands of a gifted few; and the most hopeless part of the case is, that they are not sensible of their deficiency, nor lament the deprivation! Were scores of what we consider unexceptionable works for youth, to be spread before Italian parents and preceptors—tales, travels, and biographies—they would not bid the rising generation fall to and read. 'Let them alone,' they would say; 'the boys must attend to their education: reading for mere amusement will distract their thoughts.' As for girls, the refusal would be still more decided, for they could be expected to gather only pernicious notions about seeing the world, or independence, or choosing for themselves in marriage, from the perusal!

I talked this over one day, not long before my return to Ancona, with the Marchesa Gentilina, who was sufficiently free from prejudice to listen quietly to some of my remarks, and sometimes even to acquiesce in their justice. But on this last point she was not amenable to my reasoning.

'It is all very well, *carina;* in England, I daresay, it may answer. But your women are of a different temperament, and society is differently constituted. As long as parents have the right, as with us, of disposing of their daughters in the manner they think best suited for their eventual benefit, the less they learn beforehand of the tender passion, the better. There are reforms enough wanted amongst our political abuses, without seeking to introduce innovations into private life. The whole system must be changed, or else girls had better be left in their present ignorance and simplicity.'

'But, marchesa—— This from you, who are such an advocate of progress?'

'*Cosa volete?* I do not think the warm hearts of our daughters of the south could read as phlegmatically as Englishwomen those tales in which love and courtship are ever, must ever, be predominant.'

'And if they could thereby learn to form a more exalted idea of what we tax you Italians as regarding in too common-place a light? If they were led to look upon marriage less as a worldly transaction than as a solemn compact, not to be lightly entered into, but to be lovingly and faithfully observed?'

'If, if, my dear Utopist! If, instead of all these fine results, you gave them glimpses of a liberty and privileges they could never know, and so ended by making them miserable? Take my own case for an example. I was sixteen. I had never left the convent for nine years; I was always dressed in cotton prints, of the simplest make and description, and thick leather shoes, with great soles, that clattered as I walked along the mouldy old corridors, or ran about with the other pupils in the formal alleys of the garden, of which the four frowning walls had so long constituted our horizon. My pursuits and acquirements had varied but little from what they were when I entered the convent; and to give you in one word the summary of the infantine guilelessness in which the *educande* were presumed to exist, I had never seen the reflection of my own face except by stealth, in a little bit of looking-glass about the size of a visiting-card, which I had coaxed my old nurse to bring me in one of her visits, and that we smuggled through the grating of the *parlatojo* concealed between two slices of cake!

'I knew this was to go on till a *partito* was arranged for me, for my parents did not like it to be said they had an unmarried daughter at home upon their hands; besides, many men prefer a bride fresh from the seclusion of the convent, and in those days especially, this was the strict etiquette. I had seen my eldest sister discontented and fretting till she was nearly twenty before the welcome *sposo* could be found, and I had no inclination to be incarcerated so long, though hope, and certain furtive glances at my mirror, kept encouraging me to look for a speedier deliverance.

'At last, one Easter Sunday—how well I remember it!—I was summoned to the parlatojo, and there, on the outer side of the grating, stood a group of my relations: my father and mother, my sister and her husband, and one or two of my aunts. I was so flurried at the sight of so many people, and so taken up with looking at the gay new Easter dresses of my visitors—my sister, I recollect, had an immense sort of high-crowned hat, with prodigious feathers, as was the fashion then, which excited my intense admiration and envy—that I had not time to bestow much notice upon a little dried-up old man who had come in with them, and who kept taking huge pinches of snuff and talking in a low tone with my father. My mother, on her side, was engaged in whispering to the Mother-Superior, and from her gestures, seemed in a very good humour; while the rest of the party drew off my attention by cramming me with sweetmeats they had brought for my Easter present.

'The next day but one, I was again sent for, and with downcast eyes, but a bounding heart, presented myself at the grating. There I found my mother, as before, in deep conversation with the superior, who, on my bending to kiss her hand, according to custom, saluted me on both cheeks with an unusual demonstration of tenderness.

"Well, Gentilina," said my mother, "I suppose you begin to wish to come out into the world a little?"

'I knew my mother so slightly, seldom seeing her more than once a month, that I stood in great awe of her; so I dropped a deep courtesy, and faltered: "*Si, signora;*" but I warrant you I understood it all, and already saw myself in a hat and feathers even more voluminous than my sister's!

"The Madre Superiore does not give you a bad character, I am glad to find."

"*Ah davvero!*" was the commentary upon this, "the contessina has always shewn the happiest dispositions. At one time, indeed, I hoped, I fancied, that such rare virtues would have been consecrated to the glory of our Blessed Lady, and the benefit of our order; but since the will of Heaven and of her parents call her from me, I can only pray that in the splendour and enjoyments that await her, she will not forget her who for nine years has filed a mother's place." And at the conclusion of this harangue, I was again embraced with unspeakable fervour.

'In my impatience to hear more, I scarcely received these marks of affection with fitting humility; while forgetting all my lessons of deportment, I opened my eyes to their fullest extent, and fixed them on my mother.

"Ha, ha! Gentilina," she said laughing, "I see you guess something at last! Yes, my child, I will keep you no longer in suspense. Your father and I, ever since your sister's marriage, have never ceased endeavouring to find a suitable match for you. The task was difficult. You are young, very young, Gentilina; and we could not intrust our child to inexperienced hands. It was necessary that your husband should be of an age to counterbalance your extreme youth. On no other condition could we consent to remove you from this so much earlier than your sister. But at last a *sposo* whom your parents, your family, the Madre Superiore herself, think most suitable, has been selected for you; and"——

'But I waited to hear no more. The glorious vista of theatres, jewels, carriages, diversions, which we all knew lay beyond those dreary convent-walls, suddenly disclosing itself before me, attainable through that cabalistic word matrimony, was too much for my remaining composure; and clapping my hands wildly, I exclaimed: "*Mamma mia—mamma mia*, is it possible? Am I going to be married? Oh, what joy, what happiness!" and then checking my transports, I said earnestly: "Tell me, mamma, shall I have as many fine dresses as Camilla?"

'I declare to you, signorina, that the name of my destined husband was but a secondary consideration; and when they told me he was rich and noble—the same individual who had come to the grating on the previous Sunday to satisfy his curiosity respecting me—I acquiesced without repugnance, ugly, shrivelled, aged as he was, in the selection of my parents. Knowing nothing of the world, having scarcely seen a man except our confessor, the convent gardener, and my father, I went to the altar eight days afterwards without a tear!—This sounds very horrible to you, I daresay,' she resumed, after a short pause, in which, notwithstanding her careless manner, I saw some painful memories had been awakened; 'but let me ask you—had my head been filled with notions of fascinating youths, as handsome as my Alessandro when I first remember him, kneeling at my feet, and saying: "Gentilina, I adore you!"—should I not have added a vast amount of misery to what, Heaven knows, was already in store for me—in resisting a fate which was inevitable, or whose only alternative would have been the cloister? No, no; since our domestic code is thus constituted, and as long as parents retain such arbitrary sway, let girls be left in happy ignorance that they have so much as a heart to give away! If they are to be married, they will then not dream of any opposition; if, on the contrary, as in the case of my poor sister-in-law, a suitable match has not been attainable, why, they will not, like her, be full of romantic ideas gathered from their books: and so, instead of wearying their family with their blighted hopes, will take the veil, and retire contentedly to a convent, limiting their notions of happiness to standing high in the good graces of the father-confessor, or the preparation of confectionary and cakes.'

'If I believed you to the letter, marchesa, you would have me conclude that all the women of the Roman States are, or should be, totally uncultivated.'

'Before marriage, I meant, remember that! Afterwards, all is changed. A woman of intelligence soon gets wearied of the frivolities she has been brought up to prize so highly, and will eagerly seek to instruct her mind. Study will then be her greatest pastime and her greatest safeguard.'

I knew she alluded to her own experiences, but I could not forbear pressing the subject: 'And for those who have no refined understanding to cultivate, no desire to study, and yet have learned too late they have a heart which they were not taught must be given with their hand—what safeguard is there for those, marchesa?'

'*Per Bacco!*' she cried, shrugging her shoulders, 'that is the husband's affair; nobody else need meddle with it! You see, my dear,' she added, laughing at my dissatisfied air, 'we are a long way off from the state of things you would desire to bring us to; and if you would wish for any reformation in this as well as in any of our other abuses, you must request your friends the English ministers, next time we try to shake them off, not to lure us on by sympathy and approbation, and then abandon us to worse than our former condition.'

Subsequently, I ascertained that the marchesa did not advance any more than the opinions generally held by her country-people upon this subject; although there seems a strange inconsistency in persons ever disposed to rail at the defects of their internal policy, upholding these *rococo* ideas, alleging in their justification that the impulsive Italian character in youth is unsuited to the liberty conceded at so early an age to Englishwomen.

A lady I conversed with upon this system, some time afterwards in Ancona, supposed to have had a liberal education, having been brought up in Northern Italy under her mother's roof, told me that, although she did not marry till twenty, she had not previously been allowed to peruse any work of fiction, excepting one after she was betrothed, and that was *Paul and Virginia!* For which restriction, it may be parenthetically remarked, she fully indemnified herself in the sequel, being of a studious turn, by devouring all the French novels she could lay her hands upon.

Indeed, I could multiply anecdote upon anecdote to corroborate these statements; but I must reserve a little space to speak of the cultivation of the fine arts, which, judging by the limited patronage and still scantier remuneration accorded to their professors, would seem to be considered by many as dangerous as reading to a maiden's peace of mind. Of late years, however, music enters much more frequently into their programme of education. Though not yet introduced into the native convents, it is taught at the Sacré Cœur at Loretto, and in many private families, happily as yet with more discrimination than in England—the absence of voice or ear being considered insurmountable disqualifications. The art, especially in its vocal department, can boast, even in so remote a corner of Italy, of instructors superior to any procurable in England, except at those rates which some parents complacently mention as if to set a higher value on their daughters' acquirements. Blessings on the Italians in this respect, for they have no purse-pride! If you admire a lady's singing—and it is no rarity to hear streams of melody poured from those full rounded throats, such as would electrify a London drawing-room—some member of her family will not immediately inform you that she learned from the first masters at two guineas a lesson; that no expense was spared, and so forth. They do not understand John Bull's delight at framing all he does in rich gilding, and can enjoy the fine singing of their countrywomen notwithstanding that, in Ancona at least, instruction from no mean professor was attainable at two *pauls* (tenpence) a lesson.

The music-master who taught my cousins was director of the opera, composed and understood music thoroughly, and devoted himself, heart and soul, to his profession: to these recommendations he added a very handsome exterior, great attention to his dress, gentlemanly and respectful bearing, and, nevertheless, gave twelve lessons, of an hour each, for a sum equivalent to ten shillings, and thought himself lucky too, to get pupils at that rate!

Painting, the twin-sister of music, does not enjoy the same amount of popularity. In a country, of which the churches and palaces teem with evidences of the estimation in which it was held scarcely two centuries ago, I saw only one instance, that of Volunnia's miniatures, where even, in its humblest branches, it was studied by one of the higher ranks. It is cast as a reproach upon the modern Italians that they can no longer furnish good painters; but the censure is more applicable to those who do not care to foster the talent so often doomed to languish in the ungenial atmosphere of poverty and neglect. The young artist, whose only pupils in Ancona were those furnished by my uncle's family, had studied several years in Rome, Florence, and Venice; had distinguished himself in his academical career, was full of enthusiasm and feeling, and yet so little encouragement did he receive in his native city, that it was difficult for him to earn his bread. It is almost superfluous to add, that he was as poor as any painter need be. He had one coat for all seasons; never ate but once a day, besides a cup of coffee at six in the morning, which he procured at a caffè, no fire being lighted so early at his mother's, where he lived; and had a starved, hungry look, like a lean greyhound, with large hollow eyes, and an attempt at an artistic beard. Poor fellow! his story presents so perfect an illustration of a new phase of Italian life, that I must not be considered too discursive if I conclude this paper with an account of it.

He had known my uncle's family for years, and considered himself under obligations to them, so that a little of the old Roman patron and client system was kept up in their intercourse; a respectful affection on his side, and a kindly interest in his welfare on theirs. His knowledge of art was really wonderful. As a boy, he had drawn his first inspirations from Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican, and worshipped him almost as a divinity; then ascending a step higher in *purista* principles, he devoted himself to the study of that branch of the Florentine school of which 'il beato Angelico da Fiesole' is the chief; and to hear him descant on his purity of outline and grace of composition, was in itself a lecture on design. A timely removal to Venice luckily saved him from the exaggerations into which all votaries of any peculiar style, however excellent in itself, must inevitably fall; on which, in fact, he was fast verging, as two or three pictures he had in his possession, painted while the impressions of Florence were still predominant, of ashen-hued saints, with marble-like draperies, abundantly testified: and leaving his legitimate admiration for the Beato Angelico unsubdued, yet sent him back, at the conclusion of his studies, glowing with rapture for Titian and Paolo Veronese. From the great works of the former, he had made a number of sketches and spirited copies; while he thought—as what young artist does not think—that he had discovered his peculiar secret of colouring, detailed to us, as he held forth triumphantly upon his flesh-tints and *impasto*. In addition to all these artistic disquisitions, he used, while we were taking our lessons, to give us all the political news, or rather the whispers which were stealthily in circulation, and often repeated that ours was the only house in which it was safe to express an opinion.

Then he would tell us a great deal about the crying evils of his country, much to the purport of what I have already stated; the ignorance of the women, the idleness of the nobles, the extortion and injustice of the government, and the insolence of the Austrians who supported it—all being related in beautiful and poetic Italian; for he spoke his own language with great refinement, although he did not spell it correctly.

And yet, notwithstanding these constant discussions and conversations, never was he known to pass the limits of deference tacitly laid down, never once to venture on the verge of familiarity: years of intercourse, resumed at intervals since his boyhood, made no difference. He never came to the house but as a teacher; and at the end of each lesson, he always bowed with the same ceremonious respect, and backed out of the room with the same 'servo umilissimo' as if he had been a mere stranger.

I wish I could detail some of the stories we heard from him—little romances in themselves, and admirably illustrative of the quick feelings and exaggerated sensibility of the Italian temperament, allowed more room for development in the *mezzo cetto* than in the strict etiquette of the nobility. How a young cousin, becoming desperately in love with a young man she had only seen from an opposite window, pined rapidly away; and on hearing he was already affianced, insisted on taking the veil in a convent of a very strict order: how his own sister, a very beautiful girl, nearly broke her heart from the cruelty exercised by her mother-in-law, who tried to sow discord between her and her husband, opened all the letters she received from her parents, took away all her best clothes, and distributed them among her own daughters—in fact, behaved like a *suocera* in all the acceptation of the term. But nothing interested us so much as his own history, in which he at last made us the recipients of the misery and uncertainty that were destined to be inseparable from his existence. We had observed that for some weeks he looked more than ordinarily wo-begone, scarcely spoke, and his unbrushed hair stood erect with an air of distraction it was pitiable to witness. The usual inquiries about England, the lectures upon art, the pæans to Raphael, were all at an end, and our lessons were becoming very stupid, common-place affairs, when, one day, as he was cutting a crayon, he suddenly laid it down, and said falteringly: 'Signorine, will you excuse my temerity, if, knowing all your benevolent interest in me, I tell you what makes me so ill. I have fallen in love.'

'Indeed!' we exclaimed; 'tell us all about it. Where is the lady?—how long has it been going on?—when will the *sposalizio* take place?'

'Alas!' he replied, 'what can I say? I have never spoken to her; it is two months since I first saw her; it was one evening outside the gates: she was with her mother. I beheld that modest ingenuous face, and my fate was decided. Miserable was I born, miserable have I always been, but never so miserable as now.'

'Wherefore?' I inquired, with a perplexed expression.

'Because I have no means of maintaining her—not even a few hundred dollars of my own: therefore it is of no use attempting to make the acquaintance of her family, or presenting myself as a suitor. O signorine! I have suffered so long, my secret was wearing me to the grave.'

'But you have an *avvenire*—a future, at least,' said my cousin Lucy, who, under all her sedateness, was rather of an enthusiastic turn.

'Ah,' answered he, shaking his head, 'that is easy to say for you English: we poor Italians have no future; we never can rise; we are but fools to dream of it.'

'Then do you not mean even to try to improve your fortunes, so as one day to be able to marry?'

'Heaven knows whether I do not try,' was the rueful response; 'but the days for art in Italy are gone by. You are witness, ladies, to the patronage accorded to me here. What have I to look back upon since I established myself in Ancona? One or two commissions from convents for the apotheosis of some new saint—a few portraits—at such rare intervals, and on such hard terms, that I verily believe if I were a house-painter, I should succeed better than with my aspirations to be an historical one.'

'Yet why despair?' I persisted; 'why not obtain an introduction to the family of the fair *incognita*, explain your views, and if they hold out any hopes of your ultimately being accepted, you will work away with redoubled energy. You might go and paint signs in California.' (That was all the rage just then.)

'The signorina is laughing at me, I see, but it would not be right according to our ideas. *She* had better know nothing of me; her peace of mind might be disturbed. Those friends whom I have consulted, tell me I ought even to avoid passing her when she is out walking, or going to look at her at mass. Her character is evidently so full of sensibility, that it would be easy to destroy her happiness.'

'How can you be so sure of all this, if you have never spoken to her?'

'I see it all perfectly in her face,' he answered with a determined belief in his own powers of observation, which no ridicule or reasoning could shake. His romantic passion amused us all excessively, and as he evidently liked to talk of it, the disclosure having been once made, we were in future kept fully informed of all his tortures, fears, and despondency; but fancied that an attachment, hopeless and baseless as this, could not be of long duration. Contrary, however, to what we anticipated, he became more and more in love; he looked every day thinner, his hair more wiry, his eyes unnaturally brilliant and deeper sunk.

One morning—a real wintry morning, one of the few we ever saw—he came in, livid and trembling, with a wildness in his appearance that was startling. He did not leave his hat in the hall, as was his custom, but entered with it in his hand, and making a few steps forward, paused abruptly, and said in a hoarse voice:

'The signorine will excuse me if I pray them to dispense me from my attendance for a few days. I am going into the country—yes, into the country!'

When an Italian goes into the country at such a season of the year, he must be in a desperate plight, and we anxiously demanded the reason of this rash step.

'Signorine, I am mad—I am jealous! Yesterday, I was looking up furtively at her window; another man was standing in the street near me; I fancied I had seen him there before: still a suspicion never crossed my brain, when the window opened, and she looked out. Never had she deigned to do this for me. As I live, her eyes rested upon him! All the furies seized me; I rushed to the house of my friend, my best friend, the Avvocato D——. I raved, I tore my hair, I imprecated curses upon her. He took me by the arm. "To-morrow, you must go into the country," he said; "I will accompany you." Yes, signorine, with twelve inches of snow upon the ground, I go into the country!'

And into the country he went, and from the country he returned in two or three weeks' time unrecovered; although convinced that his jealousy was groundless, the national specific had failed in this case. Then I fear we did him harm, for on the 'nothing venture, nothing have' principle, we counselled him to embody his hopes, prospects, and honest determinations, in a letter to be submitted to the young lady's family, belonging like his own to the middle classes, though more affluent in their circumstances.

Taking an injudicious *mezzo termine*, he humbly presented this epistle to the fair Dulcinea herself, as she was coming one day out of church under the care of some aunt or elderly female relation.

Haughtily flinging it on the ground, the damsel indignantly said: 'I do not know how to read letters of this description,' and passed on. Her virtue and discretion increased his admiration, while the repulse almost broke his heart. He never made any further attempt to press his suit, but moped and pined away perceptibly; in fact, he was dying of mortification and grief—so common an occurrence in this part of Italy, that they have a distinct name for the affection, and call it *passione*.

At this juncture, some friends of his who had emigrated to Tunis, in the recent troubles of Italy, wrote to recommend his joining them there; and urged on by the representations of all who were interested in his welfare—his desperate condition sanctioning so desperate a step as foreign travel was usually looked upon—encouraged especially by ourselves, with our restless, enterprising British notions, he embarked in a small trading-vessel, almost reduced to a skeleton.

Months, nay, years have passed since then, and it seemed as if all clue to the poor young painter were completely lost, when, by a strange coincidence, I received a letter from him at the very moment when the ink was still wet upon the page where I had been relating his ill-starred attachment. I wish I could transcribe the whole of this letter, I wish it could be laid tangibly before my readers—so clumsily, squarely folded, with its coarse red seal, stamped with some copper coin very probably, its stiff handwriting and deficient orthography; and its contents, so simple, so poetical, so unassuming, of which a few extracts, to give the continuation of his vicissitudes, can furnish but a very imperfect idea.

After relating the failure of the hopes with which he had landed at Tunis, he says, that resolved to leave no path that might lead to independence unexplored, he even set his beloved art comparatively aside, and had betaken himself to whatever honest employment he might find. Entering the service of the Pacha of Tripoli, he had been sent as a mineralogist—'for amongst the Turks,' he naïvely remarks, 'one may do anything—far into the interior, amongst men and manners completely different from our own, to explore a mine reported to be of silver, but which, with my usual ill-luck, turned out of very inferior iron.' Then encouraged by the pacha's promises, he accompanied him to Constantinople, where, finding to his cost that he must put no faith in princes, he turned to his painting again. But the city was swarming with Italian refugees, artists among the rest, all contending for the bare means of subsistence; so, after a few months of painful struggles, he went back to Africa, and entered into some trading speculations. Neither in this new career was he successful. Perhaps he worked with a sinking heart, for the tidings reached him that the young girl so faithfully loved was about to be married; and 'what imbittered this announcement, was learning that the character of her future husband offered but slender prospects for her happiness.' His little ventures failed; his resources were exhausted; and he was under the necessity of returning to his native country. There he found strange reverses had suddenly befallen her whom he had schooled himself to look upon as irrevocably lost. Her parents were both dead; the marriage had been broken off; and from comparative affluence, she was so reduced, as, jointly with a widowed sister, to have opened a day-school for little girls.

'I saw her then,' he goes on, 'under the pressure of sorrow. I found her in the words of Petrarch, *piŭ bella, ma meno altera;* and yet, even at that moment, my cruel destiny prevented me from saying: "I am here to comfort and sustain you!"'

Once more he went forth, hoping against hope, with the aim of establishing himself as a portrait-painter and drawing-master at ——, on the shores of the Mediterranean, whither many English families annually resort; and the object of his letter was modestly and unaffectedly to request that if I knew any of my country-people intending to winter there, I would recommend him to their notice.

I felt very sad to perceive how he overrated the *signorina forestiera's* influence, and the extent of her acquaintance; or else in his simplicity imagining that to be English is synonymous with belonging to a vast brotherhood, giving and demanding the hand of fellowship on every side. I wish it were thus in this instance at least, for the first use I should make of this blissful state of fraternity, would be to claim patronage and encouragement for the poor artist, whose history then could soon be pleasantly wound up like orthodox story-books, in these words, 'and so they were married, and lived very happily all the rest of their days.'

THE WEATHER AND THE PARKS.

This is the time, as an eminent Whitechapel individual once observed to me in confidence, 'when wicious indulgence prevails, and everybody puts both hands into his own coat-pockets;' so that one may walk 'on the C side of Regent Street'—he was accustomed to speak of the metropolis in relation to its police distribution—'from morn to eve without getting a chance at snuff-box or pocket-handkerchief.' It is dusky enough for my friend's purposes, too, even at noonday; the sun is blood-red, and the atmosphere so heavy, that the smoke can't rise, but forms 'an under roof of doleful gray' all over London. Snow is in the streets inches deep; and the driver of your four-wheeled cab insists in vain that his mare is quite strong enough for the work, and contents herself with a footspace only because she's 'artful.' The pavement is masked with ice, and old gentlemen in quiet squares about Paddington, sally out with red slippers over their shoes, and poles with pikes in them, like superannuated banditti. Upon all sides, in crowded pathways, are heard such ejaculations as these: 'Mercy me!' 'Good gracious!' 'Well, I never!' 'Take care, Marianne!' Stout females for the most part come down in a sitting posture, and are obliged to employ the assistance of the civil force to re-erect them; stout males, who are always expecting it, and whose attention is never distracted by shop-windows, generally manage to fall upon all-fours. Great streams of people are always setting from or towards Hyde Park; they throng the paths, and loom across the fog like funeral processions. The sheep that were white last week, are now turned black, the trees are black, and the marble arch is coaly by contrast with the snow. At the eastern end of the Serpentine, the poor frozen-out water-fowl are huddled together, as in expectation of attacking curs. Little children who have come to stare, and not to give, are attacked by justly indignant swans, which insist upon getting satisfaction out of their mottled arms; and the military, which is a life-guardsman attached to the nurse, is obliged to be called in to their help. A great troop of these horse-soldiers is passing in the distance; and their red plumes and cuirass, and black chargers, make a fine pageant upon the snow, and a pleasant music in the clear frosty air. This is at nine o'clock; but between seven and eight in the morning, the ice is broken on the south side for the bathers, of whom, to-day, there are no less than five—two of them gray-headed Polar bears from the Arctic Ocean, and three younger persons, probably religious fanatics. A few skaters are skimming, swallow-like, in their vicinity, and a Humane Society's man is standing by with a savage expression of countenance, and a harpoon, as though they were whales.

As the crowd increases, the professional gentlemen who have invested their capital in skates and a chair, increase likewise, and are prepared to let the former out at sixpence per pair per hour—a deposit of five shillings being required as a guarantee for their return. Under the chair is sometimes a bottle of brandy, to be used medicinally in keeping up the courage of the patient; and even after that restorative, he will often insist upon the proprietor's accompanying him a little way upon the ice until he 'feels his legs,' which he accomplishes, to all appearance, by stretching out his arms like a baby, and catching at the air. A skate-lender, with whom I spoke upon the smallness of the deposit, assured me that he had never lost but two pair in a long experience, and those under very peculiar circumstances.

'A gentleman came to me,' said he, 'some few years ago, to have a couple of hours of it, who said he had nothing about him under a five-pound note. He was so perfect a gentleman, so slap-up, so kiddy, that I said: "Well, I'll trust you." He was affable and pleasant as could be while I was putting on the irons, but he kept his eye about him all the time, as though he was expecting somebody he didn't want to see.

"I wish it was Sunday, my man," says he.

"Why so, sir?" says I.

"Why, because—— Here, let me go," says he; "hang the strap;" and in a moment he'd pulled me down the bank, and broke away from me like a harrow from a bow. A great big chap with a hook nose caught hold of me as I let go, but just missed nabbing the 'tother one.

"I'm a bailiff," says he, "and I want that man."

"Are you?" says I, "and do you?" says I, "for I ain't fond of that sort nohow."

"Yes," says the gentleman, who had fastened his strap by this time, and came skimming up quite close to us under the bank; "he's a bailiff, he is, and a very nice bailiff too—ain't you, Solomons? I'm sorry to be obliged to go so much faster than you with these here skates on; and so to be deprived of your valuable company. By bye, Solly;" and off he went again, backwards, for he was a real good skater.

"Let *me* have a pair," says the bailiff presently, who was getting awfully riled.

"Certainly," says I; "but I should like to see the five shillings first, for your friend has not left a farthing with me."

"He hasn't *got* a farthing," says the bailiff, grim enough. "Now, Mr Halphonso Cavendish 'Oward, let us see who is the fastest;" and off went the Jew after his game at a pace that was a caution to engines.

"Look out!" hollers I; "Look out!" hechoes the people; and the next moment, there they was, hare and greyhound, twisting and turning, and overshooting one another in a manner putty to behold. Moses was the better man on the irons, out and out; and the other, finding his-self beat, stood out for the part marked *Dangerous*, with the Humane Societies a-hollering at him from both sides, and him not caring one icicle. It was sink or swim with the gent, you see, all ways; and the bailiff—that I will say—stuck to him like a man. The ice quivered and cracked whenever they came together; and three times the Jew's hand was upon his collar, and three times he got away; when all of a sudden Mr 'Oward starts off as hard as he can go for the bridge, trusting to his speed to take him over the rotten ice before it had time to give—*and he did it too.* He came right on to the place in front of the Skating Club yonder, and they do say he was as pale as ashes with the fright; but he got safe away anyhow—with my pair of skates.'

'Ah, then,' said I, after this long narration, 'I suppose the Jew thought twice about following him under the bridge?'

'No; he put the steam up, and tried it on too; but there he went in—he did.'

'Bless me!' said I, 'it must have been very hard to have rescued him from such a position?'

'It *was* hard, I believe you, sir; and the man was drownded—and that's how I lost my second pair of skates.'

Those who bring these implements with them are a still finer sight than the hirers. They sit down in the snow on the other side of the pathways, and occupy themselves for about half an hour in the most miserable manner. Blue-nosed, red-handed, numb, they then hobble into the throng very cautiously, and seizing the most good-natured-looking person's arm, request, as a personal favour, that he will 'see them in.' With this assistance, a steep bank has to be descended, from which the skater must necessarily start rectangularly, at the rate of eleven miles an hour, into the midst of a vortex of people darting everywhere at twice that velocity. Whenever the ice gives way with one person, it gives way with more; for immediately upon an accident happening, skaters and sliders, and even people who have not ventured upon the ice before, all crowd round the unfortunate object, and embarrass him with gratuitous advice. Some of these go in; and then the Humane Society come, and some of those go in; and ladders, and trucks with barrels upon them, and ropes, and double Esquimaux sledges, are obliged to be put in requisition to save them. When the breakage is pretty near the bank, the chief danger arises from an excited public, who snatch down the fourteen-foot poles with hooks at the end of them, which hang from the neighbeuring trees, and proceed to rescue their fellow-creature out of four or five feet of water, without paying the least attention to where the hooks may run into him. When a hole is once made, it soon becomes popular as a place to tumble in; some skaters can't stop themselves very easily; others, principally gentlemen in government offices, cannot be convinced that the line they have always been accustomed to take is not the very best one still, and only find out their error when it is too late. Then it is a grand sight to behold the immersed bodies running as hard as they can go, with water spouting from them as from a housemaid's mop, to the Society's lying-in establishment, for brandy and blanket.

The view on either side from the top of the bridge is very singular: the banks are so thronged with walkers that you can't see ground; the drive is as crowded with carriages as in the height of summer, and the surface of the ice is covered with a sort of shifting kaleidoscope of people at full speed—with the exception of a few soldiers, however, and of still fewer of the softer sex in gay attire. These are but a blank lot, and resemble, perhaps, as much as anything—what I found to be the accepted similitude upon the bridge—a heap of spiders in a quart-bottle. I am not sure but that those who slide have the better fun, and, at all events, they seem to enjoy themselves more than the skaters. That long, swift gliding line of theirs, which never ends, comprised of such unequal materials—the steady, stout, old gentleman with muffetees, who is caught round the waist and carried on by other people every time; the youth who travels backwards with the same facility as forwards; the unhappy aspirant who *will* turn round sideways, and is instantly swept from the slide; and the *artiste*, who skims along upon one leg, and snaps his fingers all the time as though they were castanets—forms a pleasant type, it seems to me, of human life.

But by very far the best of this entertainment, and the one which sent me home delighted beyond all things with the weather and the parks, was this: A cheerful-looking lady of middle age, well dressed and seasonably, accompanied by her little foot-page, was sliding as merrily as any: she took but a short, dumpy run from the bank, to be sure, and was not the express-engine by any means; but the faithful Johnny was ever behind her, like an affectionate tender; and placing his hands on either side her waist, impelled his mistress to the goal, with safety and celerity, every time. She seemed to me an infinitely more sensible person than the frozen dowagers who were circling round the park in their shut-up carriages, and whose footmen were congealing behind them; but I doubt not, in the opinion of society, that the persevering old lady-slider was mad.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

WORK OF LAW-REFORM.

Law-reform is now, and has been for some time past, the fashion of the day, and a favourite popular theme; for not only do lawyers write and talk about it, but persons also, unfortunately, who are entirely ignorant of the law or its practice. The principles of this latter class of law-reformers, so largely represented both in the press and the House of Commons, are—that lawyers should be done away with altogether; that all the law of the land should be carried in a pocket-volume; and that it should be so plain and simple that a child might expound it. In a word, the question of law-reform is usually taken up either for the purpose of gaining notoriety, or for professional ends, or as a stepping-stone to office.

Law-reform is to be the business of the present session, and, as in the last, much is promised; but let us hope that, unlike the last, the promises may be fulfilled. The reason why so little is done is, that too much is attempted at once, and that there are too many reformers in the House. There is now no party: everybody sets up for himself, and each wishes to have reforms after his own fashion, refusing to give precedence to any other; and thus time is wasted in individual quarrels and struggles for priority, and little or nothing is done.

Since 1852, changes have been incessant, both in law and equity; some good has been accomplished; and technicalities have almost, if not altogether, disappeared. A lawyer may now hope to see the beginning and end of several Chancery suits in the course of his professional career, and the expense of such suits has been considerably diminished. Great reforms have taken place, likewise, in the practice of the courts of law; and in 1854 an equitable jurisdiction was given to these courts, although this as yet has not been productive of so much good as was expected. In the same year, and by the same act of parliament, it was ordained that a judge, having the consent of the parties concerned, may hear causes without the intervention of a jury; and this greatly expedites business at the sittings for Middlesex, where it is sometimes difficult to get a sufficient number of jurymen. In 1855, the celebrated 'Limited Liability Act' was passed, notwithstanding considerable opposition. The argument against it is stated by a great commercial authority, Mr Edmund Phillips, in a pamphlet on the subject, published last year: 'The injustice of Limited Liability Companies,' says he, 'must be apparent when it is considered that this act will empower a number of individuals to embark in business in opposition to the regular merchant or trader; but that the risk of the stronger body is not nearly so great or vital as the risk of the poorer individual; for if the merchant or trader fail—which he is most likely to do, in consequence of the reckless trading of the opposite company—he and his family are, by the bankruptcy laws, stripped of every earthly thing which they possess, even to their very beds; but if the company fail, its members are not liable to be called upon to pay one shilling more from their private properties than they have thought proper to embark in the concern; and this is, in fact, only the idle money they can afford to lose, and scarcely care for. To extend this Limited Liability Act a little further, would be to declare that no one need pay his debts unless he thinks proper, and which ought to be the rider to the act to be consistent or fair. This Limited Liability Bill ought, therefore, to be called "An Act for the better enabling Adventurers to interfere with and ruin Established Traders, *without risk to themselves*."' On the other hand, it may be said that the individual trader has an immediate control over and supervision of his affairs which the member of a joint-stock company has not. We must express our own feeling, that it would be a great pity if the principle of limited liability, under fair restrictions, should fail, as it certainly contains a bud of high promise for the working-classes of this country, in offering inducements to saving, and counteracting so far the tendency to reckless expenditure on vicious indulgence.

The statute most affecting the mercantile community passed last session, is the mercantile Law Amendment Act—the principal clauses of which provide that bills of exchange must be accepted in writing, and signed by the acceptor or his agent; and that a guarantee no longer requires a consideration for making it to appear in the writing. Alterations are likewise made in the limitations of actions, &c. The chief object of the bill, when brought into parliament, was to abolish the seventeenth section of the statute of frauds, which requires all contracts for the sale of goods or merchandise above the value of L.10 to be in writing, or a part of the goods to be accepted, or a part of the price to be paid, before an action could be brought on the contract. The mercantile world, however, seemed to be afraid that if this clause were repealed, they would be saddled with contracts which were never made. They forgot that the clause would not have prevented them from entering into a written contract when they chose. In Scotland, there is no law requiring such contracts to be in writing; and in England, in practice, by far the greater number of mercantile contracts are merely verbal.

Last session, a bill was brought in by the solicitor-general to abolish those abominations, the ecclesiastical courts; but on account of there being so many reformers, each wanting to have the act framed according to his own fancy, it was lost. There is, however, another attempt—the sixteenth, it is said—to be made to accomplish the same object during the present session.

Another good measure lost last session was the bill for amending the law of divorce. The law of divorce is a disgrace and reproach to the country. As the law now stands, the outraged husband cannot obtain a divorce unless he first publicly parades his wife's shame and his own dishonour, and gets the verdict of a jury and damages for the injury. What can be more monstrous than this! Again, the expense of obtaining a divorce is so heavy as to preclude all but the most wealthy from resorting to it. Lord Brougham, in a letter to Lord Radnor, after some severe strictures on the law of divorce, says: 'It would really be a libel upon parliament to suppose that a much longer time can elapse before the law shall be freed from the shameful defect now so generally and so justly complained of.'

A bill is to be brought in during the present session for the purpose of bringing breaches of trust within the reach of the criminal law. This ought to be, for morally there is no difference between unlawfully taking the property of another, and appropriating the same property when lawfully in your charge. In Scotland, the offence is punished criminally; but in England there is no remedy beyond a civil suit against this species of robbery. It generally happens that the trustee who has committed the fraud becomes either bankrupt or insolvent, or else flies the country; a civil suit, therefore, is out of the question; and those whom he has brought to ruin, and who are generally minors, have no remedy. But provision should be made for remunerating trustees for their time and trouble, else who will take upon themselves this onerous and irksome duty?

The law of partnership, too, is to be amended during the present session—the difficulties attending the familiar affix '& Co.,' are to be removed by a compulsory registration of partnerships. The objection to the affix '& Co.' is felt thus: a firm trade and incur debts under the style, for example, of 'John Smith & Co.' A creditor wants to recover his debt against all the partners; but as he does not know who they are, he sues John Smith alone—that is, if the bankrupt does not object, which the law allows him to do; and as it often happens that the partner ostensibly put forward has nothing to lose, the real debtors escape, and the creditor is duped.

The law of bankruptcy, it is said, is also to be the subject of amendment, and, it is needless to remark, that no branch of our laws more requires it. Amongst other amendments, one to amalgamate the law of bankruptcy and insolvency should be made; there is no ground for having them distinct, so as to require separate courts and judges.

The attorney-general, Sir Richard Bethel, has promised, and no doubt intends to keep his promise, to bring in a bill to do away with deeds of conveyance on the transfer of real property; and he proposes to assimilate the transfer of this description of property to the transfer of stock in the funds, or of property in ships. This scheme seems anything but practicable, and the difficulties attending it are manifold. How are the interests of mortgagees, or persons interested under marriage-settlements, to be protected? Again, how is the property to be identified?—for real property, with rights of way over it, rents issuing out of it, and many other peculiarities, is not described so easily as so much stock. There are many other difficulties which it would seem impossible effectively to overcome.

Let us hope, however, that during the present session, legal reform may be carried on in a proper spirit, and that the evils complained of may be removed.

GOOD NEWS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH.

One of our public functionaries has a habit of taking stock once a quarter, in anticipation of his annual summing-up. His report for the last quarter of 1856 is now before us, and we find it begin with so very satisfactory a piece of information, that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of aiding its publicity. It is—that not only in the last quarter, but during the whole four quarters of 1856, 'the health of the population of England and Wales was better than it was in any of the previous ten years.' A fact like this, given forth by the registrar-general, will no doubt be read with satisfaction everywhere. Notwithstanding the consequences of a costly war, double income-tax, and some other difficulties, we are in good health, better than at any time since 1846. So we have something to be thankful for, after all.

'The effects of sanitary measures,' says the registrar, 'are becoming apparent, although they are only partially carried out within limited areas.' From 1846 to 1855, the average of deaths was 23 in 1000; from 1855 to 1856, it fell to less than 21 in 1000. The conclusion drawn from these figures 'is decisive.'

The state of better health is shewn, moreover, in its consequences: the births in 1856 were beyond the average. The number for the year was 657,704, the highest ever registered in England, and exceeding by 22,581 the number in 1855. One county only, Westmoreland, shews a decrease; the increase in some of the others is attributed to the return of men from the war.

The same influence is observable also in the marriage returns, taking only the summer quarter. In Devonshire and Hampshire, particularly in the districts near Portsmouth, the increase in the number of marriages is considerable. Ships came home from the Black Sea and the Baltic, the crews were paid off, and Jack, having his pockets full of money, and nothing better to do, got married. But apart from the discharge of sailors, the registrar tells us there is an increase of marriages in every division of the kingdom from which he derives his returns. In Kent, the increase was greater than in Lancashire or Yorkshire; in Norfolk, the chief increase was in Norwich; and in nine counties—namely, Sussex, Wilts, Dorset, Gloucester, Salop, Rutland, Derby, Cheshire, and Northumberland—the number of marriages was less than in the corresponding quarter of 1855.

The number of deaths for the year amounts to 391,369. It was 426,242 in 1855, and 437,905 in 1854—thus shewing a remarkable improvement for 1856. We are better off, notwithstanding all our grumbling. And seeing that in the last quarter there were 157,615 births and 96,521 deaths, there remains a real increase to the population of 61,094; and taking the whole year, the increase was 266,355. To quote the registrar's words: 'The *natural* increase of population in the United Kingdom was probably at the rate of 1000 a day.' It would seem that nature is in haste to make up the losses occasioned by the war.

Recurring to last quarter, we are told that 39,063 persons emigrated in the three months, whereof 19,211 were English, 15,467 Irish, 2406 Scotch—the remainder 'foreigners,' and undescribed. It is something new to find the Irish outnumbered by the English; and that while 5987 embarked for the United States, 13,198 sailed for Australia. The number of English emigrants for the year 1856 was more than 70,000.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXXII.—A DEAD SHOT.

The unexpected closing of the conference elicited an angry shout from the Mexican horsemen; and, without waiting for orders, they galloped up to their chief. Halting at long-range, they fired their carbines and escopettes; but their bullets cut the grass far in front of us, and one or two that hurtled past, were wide of the mark.

The lieutenant, who had been only stunned, soon recovered his legs, but not his temper. His wrath overbalanced his prudence, else the moment he found his feet, he would have made the best of his way to his horse and comrades. Instead of doing so, he turned full front towards us, raised his arm in the air, shook his clenched hand in a menacing manner, accompanying the action with a torrent of defiant speech. Of what he said, we understood but the concluding phrase, and that was the bitter and blasphemous *carajo!* that hissed through his teeth with the energetic aspiration of rage and revenge.

That oath was the last word he ever uttered; his parting breath scarcely carried it from his lips, ere he ceased to live. I heard the fierce word, and almost simultaneously, the crack of a rifle, fired close to my ear. I saw the dust puff out from the embroidered spencer of the Mexican, and directly over his heart; I saw his hand pass rapidly to the spot, and the next moment he fell forward upon his face!

Without a groan, without a struggle, he lay as he had fallen, spread, dead, and motionless upon the prairie!

'Thur, durn yur carako!' cried a voice at my shoulder; 'ee won't *bid* for me agin, ee skunk—thet ee won't!'

I needed no explanation, though I turned involuntarily to the speaker. Of course, it was Rube. His rifle was smoking at the muzzle, and he was proceeding to reload it.

'Wa-hoo—woop!' continued he, uttering his wild war-cry; 'thet shortens thur count, I reck'n. Another nick for Targuts! Gi' me *her* for a gun. Wagh! a long pull it wur for the ole weepun; an the glint in my eyes too! The niggur riled me, or I wudn't a risked it. Hold yur hosses, boys!' he continued in a more earnest tone: 'don't fire till I'm loaded—for yur lives, don't!'

'All right, Rube!' cried Garey, who hastily passing under the belly of his horse, had re-entered the square, and once more handled his rifle. 'All right, old boy! Ne'er a fear! we'll wait for ye.'

Somewhat to our surprise, Rube was allowed ample time to reload, and our three barrels once more protruded over the shoulders of Garey's horse. Our animals still held their respective positions. Three of them were too well used to such scenes, to be startled by the detonation of a rifle; and the fourth, fastened as he was, kept his place perforce.

I say, to our surprise, we were allowed time to get into our old vantage-ground; for we had expected an immediate charge from the guerrilla.

Vengeance for the death of their comrade would give them courage enough for that; so thought we; but we were mistaken, as their ire only vented itself in fierce yells, violent gestures, and loud cries.

They had clustered around their chief without order or formation. They seemed to pay but slight regard to his authority. Some appeared urging him to lead them on! Some came galloping nearer, and fired their carbines; others shook their lances in a threatening manner; but one and all were careful to keep outside that perilous circle, whose circumference marked the range of our rifles. They seemed even less inclined for close quarters than ever; the fate of their comrade had awed them.

The dead man lay about half-way between them and us, glittering in his picturesque habiliments. They were weaker by his loss, for not only had he been one of their leaders, but one of their best men. They saw he was dead, though none had dared to approach him. They knew the Texan rifle of old—these spangled heroes; they saw, moreover, that we were armed with revolvers, and the fame of this terrible weapon had been already carried beyond the frontier of the Rio Grande.

Notwithstanding all that, men of our race, under similar circumstances, would have charged without hesitation. So, too, would men of theirs, three centuries ago.

Perhaps in that band was an Alvarado, a Sandoval, a Diaz, or De Soto! only in name. O Cortez! and you *conquistadores!* could you beheld your degenerate descendants!

And yet not all of them were cowards; some, I dare say, were brave enough, for there *are* brave men among the Mexicans. A few were evidently willing to make the attack, but they wanted combination—they wanted a leader: he who acted as such appeared to be endowed with more discretion than valour.

Meanwhile, we kept our eyes fixed upon them, listening to their varied cries, and closely watching their movements. In perfect coolness, we regarded them—at least so much can I say for my comrades. Though life or death rested upon the issue, both were as cool at that moment as if they had been only observing the movements of a gang of buffaloes! There was no sign of trepidation—hardly a symptom of excitement visible in the countenance of either. Now and then, a half-muttered ejaculation, a rapid exchange of thought, relating to some fresh movement of the enemy, alone told that both were alive to the peril of the situation.

I cannot affirm that I shared with them this extreme and perfect *sang froid;* though upon my nerves, less indifferent to danger, their example had its effect, and inspired me with courage sufficient for the occasion. Besides, I drew confidence from another source. In case of defeat, I had a resource unshared by my companions—perhaps unthought of by them. Trusting to the matchless speed of my horse, as a last resort, I might possibly escape. I could have ridden off at that moment without fear of being overtaken, but the craven thought was not entertained for an instant. By my honour, no! I should have accepted death upon the spot rather than desert the brave men who stood by my side. To *them* I was indebted for my life. 'Twas for *me* that theirs were now in peril; and from the first moment I had determined to stand by them to the end, and sell my blood at its dearest. In the event of both falling before me, it would then be time to think of flight.

Even this contingency had the effect of strengthening my courage, and at that moment I viewed the vengeful foe with a coolness and freedom from fear that now, in the retrospect, surprises me.

During the interval of inaction that followed, I was cool enough to reflect upon the demand which the guerrilla leader had made—the surrender of my person. Why was *I* singled out? We were all enemies alike—all Americans or Texans—on Mexican soil, and armed for strife. Why did they want *me* alone? Was it because I was superior in rank to my companions? But how knew they this?—how knew they I was a 'ranger captain?' Ha! they must have known it before; they must have come out specially in search of me!

A light flashed suddenly into my mind—a suspicion strong almost as certainty. But for the sun glancing in my eyes, I might have earlier obtained an explanation of the mystery. I drew down the visor of my forage-cap, stretching it to its full extent; I increased the shade with my flattened palms, and from under them strained my eyes upon the leader of the band. Already his voice, while in conversation with Garey, had aroused a faint recollection within me. I had heard that voice only once, but I thought I remembered it. Guided by my suspicion, I now scrutinised more closely the face of the man. Fortunately, it was turned towards me, and despite the dazzling of the sunbeam, despite the slouched sombrero, I recognised the dark features of Rafael Ijurra! In that glance I comprehended the situation. He it was who wanted the 'ranger captain!'

There was doubt no longer. My suspicion was a certainty; but with the next throb of my heart rose another, a thousand times more painful—a suspicion of——

With an effort, I stifled my emotions; a movement was perceptible among the guerrilleros; the moment of action had arrived!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A RUNNING-SHOT.

Though our enemy was once more in motion, we no longer anticipated a direct attack; the time for that had passed. The fate of their comrade had evidently checked their ardour, and too much shouting and bravado had cooled, rather than heightened, their enthusiasm. We could tell by their manœuvring that some new mode of assault had been planned, and was about to be practised.

'Cowardly skunks!' muttered Rube; 'they hain't the pluck to charge us! Who ever heerd o' fair fight in a Mexikin? Wagh! Thur arter some trick,' he continued, in a more serious tone. 'What do 'ee think it be, Billee?'

'I'm thinkin, old boy,' replied Garey, whose keen gray eye had been for some time fixed on the movements of the guerrilla—'I'm thinkin thar a goin to gallup roun, an try a shot at us Injun fashion.'

'Yur right,' assented Rube; 'thet's thur game! Scalp me ef 'taint! Look yander!—thur they go!'

The horsemen were no longer in line, nor formed in any fashion. Irregularly grouped, they exhibited a 'clump' upon the prairie, some standing still, others in motion. As Rube uttered the last words, one of them was seen to shoot out from the main body, spurring his steed into a gallop as he parted from the crowd.

One might have fancied he was about to ride off from the ground: but no; that was not his intention. When he had made half-a-dozen stretches over the plain, he guided his horse into a curve, evidently with the design of riding around us.

As soon as he had gained some score of yards from the troop, a second horseman followed, repeating the manœuvre; and then another and another, until five of the band, thus deployed, galloped round us in circles. The remaining six kept their ground.

We observed that the five had left their lances behind them, and carried only their carbines.

We were not astonished at this: we divined the intention of our enemies. They were about to practise an old prairie-tactic—a stratagem of the horse-Indians, with which all three of us were familiar.

We might have been more apprehensive about the result had it been really Indians who were going to practise the manœuvre—since in an attack of this kind, the bow, with its many missiles in a minute, is far more dangerous than either carbine or rifle. But the fact that our assailants understood the stratagem, told us we were opposed to men who had seen Indian-fight—no doubt, the pick men of the frontier—and to defend ourselves would require all the courage and cunning we possessed.

It did not surprise us that only a portion of the band galloped out to effect the surround; there was design in that, and we knew it. The five who had been detached were to wheel round us in circles, dash at intervals within range, fire their carbines, kill some of our horses, keep us distracted, and, if possible, *draw* the fire of our rifles. This purpose effected, the other six—who had already approached as near as was safe for them—would charge forward, empty their guns, and then use their lazoes with effect.

Of this last *weapon* my companions had more dread than of all the others carried by our foes. They had reason. They knew that our rifles once empty, the lazo could be used beyond pistol-range; and by such men, with far surer aim than either carbine or escopette!

We were allowed but scant time to entertain these doubts, fears, and conjectures, or to communicate them to one another. They passed before us like the lightning's flash: the quicker that they were old thoughts—things familiar from experience. We were conscious that the stratagem of our enemy had increased the peril of our situation; but we thought not yet of yielding to despair.

In an instant we had altered our relative positions. The three of us no longer fronted in one direction, but stood back to back—each to guard the third of the circle before his face. Thus stood we, rifles in hand.

The five horsemen were not slow in the execution of their manœuvre. Once or twice they galloped round us in a wide circle; and then following a spiral curve, drew nearer and nearer. When within carbine range, each fired his piece; and, retreating outward upon the main body, hastily exchanged his empty gun for one that was loaded, and galloped back as before.

In the first volley, most of their bullets, discharged at random, had passed over our heads. We heard them hissing in the air high above us. One, however, had been better aimed, and struck Rube's mare in the hip, causing the old mustang to squeal and kick violently. It did but little damage, though it was an earnest of what we might expect; and it was with increased apprehension that we saw the horsemen come back on their circling career.

You will wonder why we did not return their fire? Our guns carried as far as theirs. Why did we not use them, while the horsemen were within range? Not one of the three of us thought of drawing a trigger! You will wonder at this? It requires explanation.

Know, then, that the five men who galloped round us were five of the best horsemen in the world—no doubt the picked riders of the band. Not in Arabia, not in the hippodromes of Paris or London, could they have found their superiors—perhaps not their equals, for these men literally lived in the saddle. Each, as he approached the dangerous circle covered by our rifles, disappeared *behind the body of his horse.* A boot and spur over the hollow of the deep saddle-tree, perhaps a hand grasping the wither-lock of the horse, were all of the rider that could be seen. Presently a face might be observed, suddenly veiled by a puff of smoke from the carbine, and then ducked instantly out of sight. Perhaps the barrel of the piece might be noticed glancing along the horse's counter, while the stream of fire pouring forth, told that the rider had taken aim under the throat of his steed, the latter all the while going at full gallop.

During these manœuvres, sharp shots as my comrades were, and fair marksman as I was myself, there was no instant when we could have hit any one of the five horsemen. It would have been easier to have brought down a bird upon the wing. Their horses we might have killed or crippled, but that would not have repaid us for the risk of an empty rifle. We dared not waste a bullet on the horses. This, then, was our reason for reserving our fire.

Do not fancy from this my prolixity of explanation, that *we* were so slow in comprehending all this. No, we understood our situation well enough; we knew that to discharge our pieces—even though a horse should fall to every shot—was just what the enemy desired. That was the main point of their *ruse;* but we were too well used to the wiles of Indian warfare to be beguiled by so shallow an artifice. Words of caution passed between us, and we stood to our guns with as much patience as we could command.

It was tempting enough—provoking, I should rather say—thus to be fired at, without the chance of returning it; and my companions, notwithstanding their habitual coolness, chafed angrily under the infliction.

Once more the five horsemen came galloping around us, and discharged their pieces as before; but this time with more effect. A bullet struck Garey in the shoulder, tearing away a patch of his hunting-shirt, and drawing the blood; while another went whizzing past the cheek of Old Rube, creasing his catskin cap!

'Hooray!' shouted the latter, clapping his hand over the place where the lead had wounded him. 'Clost enough thet wur! Cuss me, ef't hain't carried away one o' my ears!'

And the old trapper accompanied the remark with a wild, reckless laugh. The rent of the bullet, and the blood upon Garey's shoulder, now fell under his eye, and suddenly changing countenance, he exclaimed:

'By the tarnal! yur hit, Bill? Speak, boyee!'

'It's nothin,' promptly replied Garey—'nothin; only a grease. I don't feel it.'

'Yur sure?'

'Sartin sure.'

'By the livin catamount!' exclaimed Rube, in a serious tone, 'we can't stan this no longer. What's to be done, Billee? Think, boy!'

'We must make a burst for it,' replied Garey; 'it's our only chance.'

'Tur no use,' said Rube, with a doubtful shake of the head. 'The young fellur mout git clur; but for you 'n me thur's not the shaddy o' a chance. They'd catch up wi' the ole mar in the flappin o' a beaver's tail, an yur hoss ain't none o' the sooplest. Tur no use.'

'I tell you it are, Rube,' replied Garey impatiently. 'You mount the white hoss—he's fast enough—an let the mar slide; or you take mine, an I'll back whitey. We mayent get clar altogether; but we'll string the niggers out on the parairy, an take them one arter another. It's better than stannin hyar to be shot down like buffler in a penn. What do *you* think, capt'n?' added he, addressing himself to me.

Just then an idea had occurred to me. 'Why not gallop to the cliff?' I inquired, looking toward the mesa: 'they can't surround us there? With our backs to the rock, and our horses in front of us, we may defy the rabble. We might easily reach it by a dash'——

'Scalp me! ef the young fellur ain't right,' cried Rube, interrupting my speech. 'It 's the very idee, plum center!'

'It are!' echoed Garey—'it are! We hain't a second to lose; they'll be round us again in a squull's jump. Look yonder!'

This conversation had occupied but a few seconds of time. It occurred just after the five horsemen had the second time emptied their guns, and galloped back to exchange them. Before they could return to deliver a third fire, our determination was taken, and we had hastily undone the fastenings of our horses, and were ready to mount. This we accomplished so quietly, that it was evident the enemy had not perceived us, and therefore entertained no suspicion of our design; hence the road towards the mesa was still perfectly open to us. In another minute, however, the five riders would have been circling around us, and that would have naturally altered our situation.

'Hurry, Rube!' cried Garey—'hurry, man, and le's be off!'

'Keep cool, Billee,' rejoined Rube, who was adjusting the bridle of Garey's horse. 'Plenty o' time, I tell ee; they ain't a comin yit. Ho-woo! ole gal!' he continued, addressing himself to the mare—'ho-woo! we're a gwine to leave you ahint a bit, but I reck'n yu'll turn up agin. They won't eat ye, anyhow; so don't be skeart about thet, ole gal! Now, Billee, I'm ready.'

It was time, for the riders were again spurring forward to surround us.

Without waiting to observe further, we all three leaped simultaneously on horseback; and, plying the spur deeply, shot off in a direct line for the mesa.

A glance behind shewed us the guerrilleros—the whole band coming in full tilt after us, while their cries sounded in our ears. To our satisfaction, we saw we had gained ground upon them—our sudden start having taken them by surprise, and produced in their ranks a momentary hesitation. We had no fear of being able to reach the mesa before they could overtake us.

For my own part, I could soon have ridden out of sight altogether; so could Garey, mounted on the white steed, that, with only a raw-hide halter, was behaving splendidly. It was Garey's own horse, a strong but slow brute, that delayed us; he was ridden by Rube; and it was well the chase was not to be a long one, else our pursuers would have easily overhauled *him*. Garey and I kept by his side.

'Don't be afeerd, Rube!' shouted Garey, in a tone of encouragement; 'we ain't a goin to leave you—we'll stick thegither!'

'Yes,' added I, in the excitement of the moment, 'we live or die together!'

'Hooray, young fellur!' cried Rube, in a burst of wild gratitude—'hooray for you! I know yur the stuff, an won't leave me ahint, though I gin you the slip oncest—when you mistuk me for the grizzly. He, he, hoo! But then, you see twur no use o' my stickin to you—ne'er a bit o' good. Wagh! them niggurs ur gettin nigher!'

We were riding directly for the middle of the mesa, whose cliff, like a vast wall, rose up from the level plain. We headed for its central part, as though we expected some gate to open in the rock and give us shelter!

Shouts of astonishment could be heard mingling with the hoof-strokes. Some of the expressions we heard distinctly. 'Whither go they?' '*Vaya!* do they intend to ride up the cliff?' '*Carrambo! van en la trampa!*' (Good! they are going into the trap!)

Shouts of exultation followed, as they saw us thus voluntarily placing ourselves in a position from which retreat appeared impossible.

They had been apprehensive, on our first galloping off, that we might be mounted on swift horses, and meditated escaping by speed; but on discovering that this was not our intention, cries of joyful import were heard; and as we approached the cliff, we saw them deploying behind us, with the design of hemming us in. It was just the movement we had anticipated, and the very thing we wished them to do.

We galloped up close to the rocky wall before drawing bridle; then, suddenly flinging ourselves to the ground, we placed our backs to the cliff, drew our horses in front of us, and holding the bridles in our teeth, raised our rifles towards the foe. Once more the three shining tubes were levelled, promising certain death to the first who should approach within range.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RUBE'S CHARGER.

Our attitude of defence, thus suddenly assumed, produced a quick effect upon our pursuers, who pulled up simultaneously on the prairie. Some who had been foremost, and who fancied they had ridden too near, wheeled round and galloped back.

'Wagh!' ejaculated Rube; 'jest look at 'em! they've tuk care to put plenty o' paraira atween our guns an thur cowardly karkidges. Wagh!'

We at once perceived the advantage of our new position. We could all three shew front wherever the enemy threatened. There was no longer any danger of their practising the surround. The half-circle behind us was covered by the mesa, and that could not be scaled. We had only to guard the semicircle in front—in fact, less than a semicircle, for we now perceived that the place was *embayed*, a sort of re-entering angle formed by two oblique faces of the cliff. The walls that flanked it extended three hundred yards on either side, so that no cover commanded our position. For defence, we could not have chosen a better situation; gallop round as they might, the guerrilleros would always find us with our teeth towards them! We saw our advantage at a glance.

Neither were our enemies slow to perceive it, and their exulting shouts changed to exclamations that betokened their disappointment.

Almost as suddenly, their tone again changed, and cries of triumph once more rose along their line.

We looked forth to discover the cause. To our dismay, we perceived a reinforcement just joining them! Five fresh horsemen were riding up, evidently a portion of the band. They appeared to have come from behind the mesa—from the direction of the rancheria—though, as we galloped forward, we had not observed them: the mound had concealed them from our view. Notwithstanding this accession to their strength, their courage did not appear to gain by it.

Almost on the instant that their new allies arrived upon the ground, the troop filed off by twos, and deployed across the mouth of the little bay in which we had taken shelter. The movement was soon completed, and six pair of them were now ranged before us at equal distances from each other. The remaining three—Ijurra and two others—kept their places directly in front of us. In one of the latter I recognised a ruffian whom I had frequently noticed at the rancheria. He was a man of large size, and, what is rare among Mexicans, red-haired; but I believe he was a *Vizcaino*. He was familiarly known by the sobriquet of *El Zorro* (the Fox), probably on account of the hue of his hair; and I had heard from good authority—that of the *alcalde himself!*—that the fellow was neither more nor less than a *salteador*. Indeed, El Zorro made little secret of his calling. The brigand of Mexico is usually well known to his countrymen. During his intervals of leisure, he appears in the populous town, walks boldly through the streets, and freely mingles in society. Such was El Zorro, one of the right-hand men of Ijurra.

The design of our enemy was now manifest: they had no intention of making an immediate attack upon us; they saw that our retreat was impossible, and had resolved to hold us in siege, perhaps till thirst and hunger should force us to surrender.

Their calculation was founded on probability. If their valour was weak, their cunning was strong and subtle.

Rube was now greatly 'out of sorts.' When he saw the guerrilleros 'fixing' themselves in the manner described, he seemed to regret that we had taken our stand there.

'We're hyur!' he exclaimed peevishly, 'an how ar we to git clur agin? Scalp me, Bill! ef we hedn't better a fit 'em on the paraira, afore we gits weak wi' hunger. Wagh! I kud eat a griskin now, an a good chunk o' a one. Ay, smoke away!' (some of the Mexicans had lighted their cigars, and were coolly puffing at them)—'smoke away, durn yur! yur yeller-skinned skunks! I'll make some o' ye smoke afore mornin, or my name ain't Rube Rawlins. Gi's a bit o' bacca, Bill; maybe it'll take the edge off o' my stummuk. Wagh! I feel as holler about the kidneys as my ole mar—— Geehosophat! See the mar!'

The emphatic utterance of the last words caused Garey and myself to look towards the speaker, and then in the direction in which he pointed. A scene came before our eyes, that, spite the depression of our spirits, caused both of us to break into loud laughter.

The 'ole mar,' that for many long years had carried Rube over the mountains and prairies, was a creature that scarce yielded to himself in peculiarity.

She was a lank, bare-ribbed, high-boned animal, long-eared like all of her race, for she belonged to the race of Rosinante. The long ears caused her to look mulish, and at a distance she might have been mistaken for a mixed breed; but it was not so—she was a true mustang, and, spite of her degenerate look, a pure Andalusian. She seemed to have been, at an earlier period of her life, of that dun yellowish colour known as 'clay bank'—a common hue among Mexican horses; but time and scars had metamorphosed her, and gray hairs predominated, particularly about the head and neck. These parts were covered with a dirty grizzle of mixed colour. She was badly wind-broken, and at stated intervals, of several minutes each, her back, from the spasmodic action of the lungs, heaved up with a jerk, as though she was trying to kick, and couldn't. Her body was as thin as a rail, and her head habitually carried below the level of her shoulders; but there was something in the twinkle of her solitary eye—for she had but one—that told you she had no intention of giving up for a long time to come. As Rube often alleged, 'she was game to the backbone.'

Such was the 'ole mar,' and it was to her that our attention was now so suddenly called.

Having parted from her on the prairie, in the wild gallop that followed, we had thought no more of the creature, not caring—that is, Garey and myself—what became of her. Rube, however, was far from sharing our indifference as to her fate. He would almost as soon have parted with one of his 'claws' as that same faithful companion, and we had heard him expressing his hopes that no harm would come to her.

Of course, we had concluded that she would either be shot or lazoed by one of the guerrilleros. It appeared, however, that this was not to be her fate just then. Resolving not to be parted from her master so easily, she had galloped after us. Being slow, she soon fell behind, and for a while was mixed up with the horses of the guerrilleros. Of course the men had noticed her, but seeing that she was a worthless brute, had not deigned to make a capture of her.

In due time she fell into the rear of the whole troop; but even that did not turn her from her original intention, and at the moment of Rube's exclamation, she was just breaking through the line of deployment on her way to join him. From the manner in which her nose was held as she ran, she appeared to be trailing him by the scent.

Seeing her pass, one of the guerrilleros dashed after to capture her; perhaps because there was an old saddle with some of Rube's traps buckled upon it. Mare, saddle, and all, were scarcely worth the fling of a lazo, and so the man appeared to think; for instead of using his lazo, he rode forward with the intention of seizing the mare by the bridle.

The feat proved not so easy of accomplishment. As the fellow bent down to grasp the rein, the old mare uttered one of her wild squeals, slewed her hind-quarters about, and raising her heels high in air, delivered them right upon the ribs of the Mexican. The heavy 'thud' was heard by all of us; and the man swayed from his saddle, and fell to the ground—to all appearance badly hurt, and most probably with a pair of broken ribs.

The squeal of the mare was echoed by a shrill laugh from the throat of her delighted master; and not until she had galloped up to him, did he cease to make the rocks ring with his wild cachinnations.

'Wa-hoo—woop! yur thur, ole gal!' he shouted as the animal halted before him. 'You gin 'im a sock-dolloger—*you* did. Yeeup! ole blueskin! yur welkum back! an ye've fotched my saddle too! Hooray! Ain't she a beauty, Bill? She's wuth her weight in beaver-plew. Wagh! that 'ee ur, ole beeswax! Kum hyur this away—thur now!'

And the speaker proceeded, after some more apostrophising, to draw the animal closer up to the cliff, placing her body as an additional barricade in front of his own.

Our involuntary mirth was of short duration; it was interrupted by an object that filled our hearts with new apprehension.

THREE CHAPTERS OUT OF MY LIFE.

WRITTEN BY UWAROWSKIJ OF YAKUTSK, FOR THE NOBLE LORD OTTO NIKOLAJEWITSCH.

[This is a translation from the only written specimen of the Yakut language, which, though spoken throughout a large portion of the Russian dominions, has hitherto remained entirely oral. The above-named Uwarowskij—a *bonâ-fide* personage—states, in the introduction to his work, that he undertook the task of reducing this, his native tongue, to letters, at the request, and with the assistance, of his patron Nikolajewitsch. The odd mixture of simplicity and shrewdness evidenced therein, throws a curious light upon the modes of life and thought in a region so far removed from European civilisation.]

CHAPTER I.

On the left bank of the river Lena, one hundred *kös* from the town of Yakutsk, and near the Arctic Sea, is, or rather was—for it exists no longer—a place called Shigansk. Here lived my father, who was commander of the district; and here I was born.

I remember little or nothing of Shigansk, for my father returned to Yakutsk when I was scarcely five years old. One summer morning, however, I can recall distinctly, when I was almost frightened to death at the sight of a terrible man, who stood at the entrance of the house with a loaded gun in his hand. He had been placed there on guard, lest his companions, by mistake, should take our property. He was, in fact, one of a gang of fourteen or fifteen escaped convicts. They had fled from that part of Okhotsk where the salt is prepared, plundering on their way the goods of many merchants; and had gone down the Aldan to the Lena, and so come by boats to Shigansk. Arriving there at night, they found the soldiers and Cossacks asleep; so they bound them hand and foot, and made them dead-drunk; after which they put them into the prison, and locked the door; then, dividing themselves into several parties, the marauders proceeded to plunder the whole town.

On the same day, about the time when the milking of the cows begins—between nine and ten o'clock—they all assembled in our house, having finished sacking the place. I remember as well as if it were only yesterday, how these savage men without nostrils, and with blue stains upon their faces—they were branded criminals—stood warming themselves before the fire, the blood of those whom they had murdered yet steaming from them. My father and mother were standing by; they had quickly overcome their terror, like sensible people, only too thankful for their safety so far.

I remember how the robber-captain took me upon his knee, and gave me sweet things as I sat there crying. He was a Georgian by birth, a man of enormous stature; he had all kinds of weapons hanging to his girdle, and wore scarlet leggings ornamented with silver down the seams. He and his band ate an enormous breakfast; and about mid-day, taking their rich booty with them, they sailed away down the Lena.

It is impossible to describe the lamentations of our neighbours. There were about thirty families in the town; and at night, when they returned from the forest, to which they had fled, they found their houses ransacked—in a word, cleared out from top to bottom.

During the same summer—but I do not remember how many months later—the soldiers and Cossacks who had come from Yakutsk, overtook the robbers seventy kös from Shigansk, and after a fierce resistance, killed nearly every man of them: but the stolen property was never recovered.

Shigansk is wanting in every beauty and variety which can charm the eye. The character of the country is this: a slip of land between two mountains, surrounded by a wood so thick that a dog would not find room to push his nose into it; besides which, as soon as you have gone about ten steps, you sink up to the knees in soft rotten mould. The following are the only kinds of berries to be found in it: bilberries, black bilberries, red currants, and hips and haws.

The winter lasts for eight months; and during that time, people never take off their warm clothing. Two months are expended between spring and autumn; and thus, out of the whole year, only two months remain for the poor summer. In winter, the snow falls higher than the house-tops; the wind blows fiercely, so that it is impossible to keep upon your feet. The cold freezes your very breath; and during two of the winter months, the eye of man never looks upon the sun.

To speak the truth, if my will had been consulted in the matter, I would by no means have chosen Shigansk for my birthplace. Its inhabitants are Tungouses, and they number from four to five hundred. These people live by the chase, wading through the sea of snow round about Shigansk to a distance of more than two hundred kös.

The animals they hunt are the wild reindeer, the black fox, the sable, the fox with the dark-coloured throat, the red fox, white fox, squirrel, ermine, black bear, and white polar bear. Fossil mammoth tusks are likewise eagerly sought by them. No country is without some kind of beauty; you may find it even in Shigansk during the two summer months, when the sun never sets. Nor is any land without its peculiar plenty. Thus, the rivers about Shigansk are swarming with delicious fish: salmo nelma (a kind of salmon trout), bleak, sturgeon, sterlet, tschir (a kind of salmon), muksun, omul, salmo lavaretus, and countless more. All these are spoiled and wasted; first, for want of salt, and then through a country usage. The Tungouse digs a hole, about a fathom in depth, near the place where he has taken his fish. He covers the sides of it with bark, and spreads bark also over the bottom. Then, after having cleaned and taken out the bones of his fish, he presses them down into the pit, filling it as full as possible. They lie here until they are blue and putrid, and then become a favourite food of the Tungouses. I must confess, that in my childhood I ate it with great relish, and would eat it even now, if I had any.

On the day of my departure from Shigansk, I took, according to the custom of the time, a bladder full of earth from my birthplace, in order that, when I suffered from the home-sickness, I might mix it with water, and drink it. However, fortunately, I have never felt this disorder, and so have never been obliged to fill my stomach with black earth. From that time until now, I have not once entered Shigansk. God only knows whether I shall ever again see the place of my birth.

Two kös and a half to the north of Yakutsk there is a place called Killäm. Here my father and mother had built a pretty Russian house, in which they lived before they went to Shigansk. Close to them, but in a separate house, lived my mother's parents. At that time, I had never seen a broad field or an open plain; I had seen only the bright foliage of the water-hemlock, spreading over a wider surface than the eye can travel, or growing for miles and miles by the river-side; or else rocks and hills covered from base to summit with thick impenetrable woods. I had never heard the lark's song, or the voice of a singing-bird; I had listened only to the cries of the raven and crow, and now and then to the piping of bull-finches. The only grass I had ever seen was the scentless reed-grass. You may imagine, therefore, how great was my astonishment when I reached Killäm. An open meadow, more than a kös in breadth, and several kös in length, met my eyes; the air above me trembled with a green glittering, that was even like the surface of the water. The variety of the flowers, and their great number, gave to the land the appearance of being overspread by a green or yellow garment. Here and there were thick groves of larch and birch. A pure rapid stream flowed through the middle of the meadow, and towards the bright sands of a broad river, bordered with black and precipitous banks. Thick rich meadow-grass grew on the further side of the river, and on this plain the scythes of hundreds of mowers glittered in the sunshine. Horses and cattle without number were grazing on the broad expanse of the meadow, fearing nothing, and wandering about at will. Five or ten mud-plastered Yakut cottages, and some large white shining conical summer *yourtes*, stood out as if in a picture. The windows of these yourtes, of mica or of glass, shone like jewels in the distance, from our house, which stood boldly out on a considerable elevation above the plain.

No sooner were we settled at Killäm, than misfortune fell upon us. My father had never known a day's illness until he was in his seventy-second year; then, one day at dinner-time, he fell senseless upon the bench; and before an hour had passed, he gave up his soul to God. My mother's sorrow was beyond all bounds; and indeed it could not well be otherwise, for she had lost the husband with whom she had lived for upwards of forty years in the most perfect harmony. After my father's burial, my mother found herself in very straitened circumstances. There were debts remaining to the amount of 800 or 900 roubles, which was then accounted a large sum. They had lived in Shigansk for nine years, and found on their return to Killäm but a very small number of the cattle which had been left there; the greater part of them had been lost through the mismanagement of strange hands, and the house had stood empty so long, that it was going to ruin.

The time was approaching when I must manage to get a little learning: for this purpose, it was necessary that we should live in the town; but we had no house there. All these things together troubled my mother greatly; but, nevertheless, they did not draw her attention from business. And now, do not blame me for saying a few words about this good mother. She could neither read nor write, and yet she was a woman of considerable talent. She had the most remarkable memory I ever heard of; she remembered everything that had happened from the time she was four years old, and she never forgot a single thing that she had heard from that time until she was seventy. She would tell you without a moment's hesitation, the day on which every festival in the year fell; she knew all about the governors who had lived a hundred years ago; and if she had once calculated the addition or division of ever so large a sum of money, she would tell you the result without a fault. People who had forgotten any circumstance or event, constantly came to her to settle their disputes. She knew the national traditions, fables, songs, and riddles—indeed everything, down to needle-work.

She was a very godly woman: to the day of her death, she had never spoken an untrue word, neither had any hungry man ever left her house without being filled. In consequence of this, she was respected as a good woman, and one who had an unfeigned love of truth. Whoever had deceived her, was ashamed to acknowledge his guilt, and whoever had gratified her by any good deed or any service, considered himself fortunate from that day.

No one dies with the dead; the living feels with the living. So, after my mother had got over her first grief, she began to put the house in order, and then during the five years in which we lived at Killäm, she occupied herself in restoring the cattle to their original number.

Our life at Killäm was a very dull one. During five months in the year, the cold was so great that we could not get out. In the morning, my grandfather taught me to read and write; in the evening, I used to read the Holy Scriptures to my mother, or she would instruct me to love God, to honour the emperor, to care for the poor, to be compassionate, to do no wrong to any man. In short, she endeavoured to train me to that course of action which the word of God says it is our duty to follow. And in consequence of my great love to my mother, and of my natural disposition, I listened with reverence to every word she said.

About this time, we became acquainted with many of the inhabitants of Yakutsk, who afterwards loved me as their own child, and whom I loved with my whole heart. It was thus that I learned their language thoroughly, and made myself acquainted with their mode of life and thought. I also listened eagerly to all their tales, songs, riddles, and traditions; went gladly to their festivals, wedding-feasts, and national assemblies, and took part in the games which they celebrate in summer. It was thus I learned to excel in all their sports. I was renowned as a good shot, either with the gun or the Yakut bow, and received much praise for the manner in which I would mount a wild-horse, and make it fly like the wind across the broad plain. By certain signs about a horse, I could speak with decision as to its strength, speed, spirit, and temper; and at the very first sight of horned cattle, I could tell their value.

During the summer months, the lakes of this region abound with different kinds of water-fowl; in the woods and forests, hares, black-cock, partridges, and the hazel-hen, are very plentiful.

The geese, ducks, swans, cranes, storks, and different kinds of small birds make so much noise, that in spring when the ice breaks up, and in winter when their young are fledged, and they fly away to warmer lands, it is impossible to get any sleep for them.

I suppose there are few men who have killed so many birds as I have from my eleventh or twelfth year upwards. I had such a love of sport, that a journey of three days without sleep was no exertion, for I never knew what it was to feel weary. In autumn, when waiting for dawn, I have often slept on the damp earth, the trunk of a tree for my pillow, and without any extra covering, while the wind blew, and rain and snow were falling. Or when fishing, I have been wading the whole night in cold water on the sands where the nets were set out.

In later years, it has been very useful to me thus to have been early accustomed to exercise and exertion. In this manner, time passed on, but at length it became necessary for us to reside in the town; so my mother had our house at Killäm taken down, and removed to Yakutsk, where it was again erected in a good position which she herself had chosen.

In my sixteenth year, I obtained a situation as one of the Imperial Corps of Writers in the Upper Court of Yakutsk. A man of the name of N—— N—— was at the head of this office. He was of low origin, and knew very little of the present style of writing, and yet he was looked upon as indispensable; and whilst he enjoyed such good-fortune, he would scarcely give other men a few kopecks for their labour. By his command, we sat daily, and wrote without intermission nine hours, from early morning until mid-day, and eight hours from mid-day until night, making altogether seventeen hours. For this labour, we were paid one or two copper roubles* a month.

After being in this situation for about two years, I became senior clerk of my table; and in the third and fourth years, the direction of six tables was given to me. Besides this, I was, shortly after, appointed private secretary to the governor. About ten persons were appointed to help me in the discharge of all these onerous duties: one-half of them consisted of young children, who were placed under me for instruction; the other half were confirmed drunkards. In consequence of this, there was no end to my work, and I had to labour for twenty hours a day. My salary at this time was five copper roubles a month. The love of my superiors, the esteem of all men, and, above all, my mother's joy, gave me strength; moreover, I had the consciousness that my labour was not in vain.

My mother had buried twelve children, and also her beloved husband, and now she lived but for me. Just as I was thus rejoicing her heart, and at the time when she should have rested from her labour, she was attacked by a terrible and fatal disease, which increased from day to day, and confined her to her bed for two whole years. During all this time, I never allowed any one else to wait upon her for a single night; I gave her medicine and food, moved her in bed from side to side, did everything for her with my own hands, and slept in a chair by her bedside. Very frequently I passed a sleepless night, and then went to the office.

At last her strength began to diminish visibly. I was with her for nine whole days and nights before her death, and during that time I never once left her side, and never closed my eyes in sleep. Her parting words to me during these nine days were many, very many. The night before her death she said: 'Do not stay in the town of Yakutsk; it is full of envious Russians. The Yakuts love you, and will always love you: this will give birth to envy, which, taking root, will grow until you are obliged to defend every word you say, until your freedom is fettered, and you are brought to misery. Sell your house, therefore, and your goods, and go to Russia; there you will see the glorious emperor, and then your fortune will be made. You will be left all lonely under the sun; but you know my heart. Do not wander away from the good path; and then, whatever misfortune may befall you, you will be happy. Forget not to help your fellow-men, for all men are of one family, and have one Father in heaven. In the morning, I shall die: when the sun rises, send for the priest, and call together my relations and friends.'

On the following morning, so soon as the day began to break, I sent for the priest. My mother confessed her sins, received the Lord's Supper, and took leave of all the friends who had by that time assembled at my summons. Then she embraced me, and I felt her cold dying breath on my shoulder. After a few moments, all who were present said, with one voice: 'She is dead!' It was so. As she lay there on her bed, she never looked like a dying person; not one feature of her countenance had changed, and there was no difference between her death and the light sleep of one who is weary. We watched her countenance without the least fear; there was a smile of joy upon it, as if the dear mother were made glad by the sight of a seat prepared for her in that bright region where the great God dwells, and as if the soul that was purged from sin rejoiced to quit the worn-out body. This was the way in which she died.

Good mother! Of all the days that thou didst live here under the sun, not one passed without care: thine was no easy life; thy happiness consisted solely in good deeds. For these thy good deeds thou wilt be made happy now. With my mother, I lost my only joy on earth. I have neither brothers nor sisters, nor have I ever married; so that from that time until now there has been no one to mourn over my dark days or to rejoice at my good-fortune. I am a stranger to all men, and I enter every house as a guest. There was now nothing of any interest left for me in Yakutsk.

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* The copper or paper rouble, or rouble banco, is a quotation of fees according to an obsolete coinage, like those we make in guineas; the copper rouble is two-sevenths the value of the standard or silver rouble, which is worth from 3s. 6d. to 3s. 8d.

It is true the governor loved me as his own son. I was at the head of his office, and far from allowing me to go to another town, he would not let me leave him for a single hour. But he died; and so soon as he was dead, I went to Irkutsk, having first sold my house and property, and paid the debts which had been owing since my father's death. Here I obtained a situation in the governor's office, and lived in peace for a year and a half. My salary was eighty roubles a month, and I had no other duties and cares than the light ones of writing.

FEVER-POISONS.

[On the subject of scarlet fever, which has been lately making extraordinary havoc among old and young, the following useful observations occur in a small tract intended for popular dissemination by Mr R. Pairman, surgeon, Biggar.]

After referring to the value of thorough ventilation, light, and cleanliness, in order to disinfect clothes and apartments from the invisible air-poison exhaled from the sick, the author proceeds:—It is important to know regarding infection, that when not destroyed or dispersed in the sick-room, it attaches itself and adheres with great tenacity to all articles of furniture—chairs, tables, drawers, &c., nestling in their innumerable pores; and unless these articles be scrubbed with a solution of chloride of lime, or exposed to a strong heat, or a free current of air for several hours, it may again become evolved, *more virulently than at first*, after the lapse of many weeks. But it chiefly adheres to cotton and woollen materials. The patient's body-clothes and blankets become saturated with it, like a sponge with water. And in airing these materials, a mere passing breeze is not always sufficient to carry it away. A genteel country family lately related to me that a few years ago they had occasion to reside some time in Edinburgh; while there, one of the domestics became affected with fever of a peculiar type. After her recovery, the bed-clothes—as was thought—were sufficiently aired, packed up, and conveyed home along with the family. Through some inadvertence, they remained for four months thus folded up; after which, being required for use, they were opened out and washed. Within a week, the person who washed them became attacked with the same type of fever, though none was prevailing in the district at the time; so that infection thus imprisoned in a blanket, or anywhere else, and not exposed to any current of air, seems not only quite indestructible, but, while thus confined, probably grows in virulence every day. Thus the infection of plague—which is just a form of typhus fever—has been packed up in a bale of cotton, and after being conveyed many hundred miles, struck with instant death the person who unloosed it. The following curious and dreadful incident, related by Dr Parr of Exeter, shewing how plague was once disseminated in an English town, we extract from Macaulay's *Dictionary of Medicine:* "The last plague which infested the town in which we now write," says Dr Parr, "arose from a traveller remarking to his companion, that in a former journey he had the plague in the room where they sat. 'In that corner,' said he, 'was a cupboard where the bandages were kept; it is now plastered, but they are probably there still.' He took the poker, broke down the plastering, and found them. *The disease was soon disseminated, and extensively fatal.*"

The next point requiring notice is, that one man may convey infection to another, while he himself escapes the disease. Some years ago, I received a message from a much esteemed and worthy minister, requesting a visit to two of his children. On arriving, I found them ill with scarlatina; and as they had both become suddenly affected *at the very same hour* the previous evening, it was evident that both had simultaneously imbibed the poisonous dose. But the question arose: Where could they possibly get infection? for they had ever been carefully tended by their nurse, come in contact with nobody but members of the family, and no fever of any description was prevailing for several miles around. At length the father remembered that about a week before he had visited a little girl under scarlatina in an adjoining parish; had, in the act of engaging in religious conversation, sat by her bed, taken her by the hand, rubbed his clothes on the bed-clothes of the patient—in a word, had quite unconsciously done everything likely to saturate his own clothes with infection; after which, the night being cold, he wrapped his great-coat firmly around him—thus inadvertently preventing its dispersion—mounted his horse, and trotted home at a rapid pace. On reaching home, he threw off his great-coat, drew in his chair to a comfortable fire, and as any fond parent would be apt to do, forthwith got both of the children perched upon his knee, little dreaming of the poisonous present a father's love was unconsciously bestowing. That this was the mode of communicating the disease was evident by a process of exact calculation; for the infection of scarlatina lurks in the blood about five days before the fever shews itself; and on calculating five days back from the onset of the fever, we were brought exactly to the time when the incident occurred.

If two pieces of cloth of the same material, the one *black*, and the other *white*, were, in equal circumstances, and for the same length of time, exposed to infection, the black cloth would be far sooner saturated with it than the other. We have here something analogous to the well-known law about the absorption of heat. As dark objects absorb heat more powerfully than white ones, so do they also more readily absorb infection, and all kinds of smells. Hence the mere fumigation of closes and wynds in epidemic seasons is not enough; they are afterwards very properly whitewashed. Hence also the wholesomeness of light as well as air in the dwellings of the poor, and of all those measures of cleanliness and comfort which the whiting-brush is able to impart. The haunts of infection realise those conditions with which childish fancy clothes the haunts of spectres. Dark and cheerless are its favourite dens. The "bleezing ingle and the clean hearth-stane," it seems to shun; but lurks and lingers in the gloomy hovel, fattens on its dirt, and in the crevices of its smoked and dingy walls finds those most congenial nestling-places which it cannot find in the plastered, whitewashed, smooth, and shining walls of cleanliness. Its fittest emblem is that mysterious plant the deadly nightshade, which loves the darkness rather than the light, and luxuriates less abundantly in sunshine than in gloom.

SONNET.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

The loved are never lonely: round them still
The air is rife with spiritual essences,
Whose hauntings—as about sweet flowers the bees—
Pay musical obeisance, and fulfil
Fond tasks and welcome, though invisible.—
Nor are the loving lonely: like far seas
Where man is not, yet living things the breeze
And pregnant wave inhabit, they have shed
Deep in their hearts, howe'er remote from life,
Images of the absent and the dead,
And therefore know not loneliness! Alas
For him who loves not, is not loved—the strife
Of aimless action only his! To pass
O'er Earth, like frivolous words forgotten soon as said!

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THE SPAN OF LIFE.

THE fashion is to moralise on the speedy metamorphosis of the muling and puking child into the lean and slippered pantaloon. The swift and merciless approach of death, kicking at the door of cottage and palace with impartial foot, and interrupting alike the plans of the governed and the governor, the ignoramus and the scholar, is often dwelt upon with something like affectionate pathos, not unfrequently in a tone of querulous reflection. Mr Growler, a very worthy and practical gentleman, embodies his sentiments somewhat in this fashion: 'Threescore years and ten are equivalent to forty and odd years of self-consciousness, representing my twenty and odd years of activity. When this short period has elapsed, the spring of life has run itself completely down. If native centrifugal energy keep the machine moving yet a little while, it jerks and creaks like a rusty fly-wheel.' A plaintive statistician perchance adds, that the term of life mentioned by the psalmist, and adopted by Mr Growler, is considerably over the average derived from the tables of mortality. The poets, with grand parade of metaphor and trope, flourish of mournful trumpets, and wailing of Æolian lyres, follow in the wake of the same idea; and so sentimental humanity makes capital of the evanescence of life. It may be worth while to inquire how far this reflection is philosophically correct and practically useful.

Things temporal must ever shrink into nothingness in the presence of things eternal. The solemn voice of religion warns us of the infinite expanse lying beyond finite time, and of the infinite possibilities folded in the breast of the future. Yet we may reasonably question, whether the grave import of this warning would be lessened to contemplative minds though the span of mundane existence were lengthened to five hundred years. Let us imagine such an order of things to exist, and that our friend Mr Growler has reached his grand climacteric of four hundred years, and is engaged in meditation on the fleeting nature of sublunary things. Is it not likely that the decline of life would appear to him precipitous and sudden, and the slopes of memory terribly foreshortened in the mental review? Without much strain upon the fancy, we may suppose that Methuselah in his green old age sometimes mourned over the premature decease of a contemporary cut-off in the flower of youth at the age of fifteen score years, after a lingering illness of rather more than a century. Whatever the given term of human life might be, the boundless margin of darkness lying around it, and the doubtful eventualities of pestilence and disease, would still render needful the illumination and solace of religious faith.

In actual life, we do not find men much impressed with the brief duration of their probable career. The jubilant spirit of youth, and the calm strength of manhood, are tempered by the uncertainty rather than the brevity of existence; and trustfulness so moderates even this sense of uncertainty, that it does not interfere, in healthy minds, with the steady and laborious pursuits of earthly aims, although it is sufficient to furnish food for reflection, and stimulate to a holier purpose. The Supreme Will has thus ordained with beneficent intention, for history teaches us that the assurance or strong probability of untimely dissolution operating on large communities of men, is the reverse of beneficial to their moral and religious nature. The plague of Athens in the classic era, and that which desolated the cities of Europe in the middle ages, afford this lesson. In the pages of Thucydides and Boccaccio, is ample proof that the result of such a feeling is moral disorganisation and reckless despair. The wisdom of faith becomes supplanted by the shallow philosophy—'Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.' But in a normal state, such a presentiment does not predominate. The child regards life as of vague, indefinite extent; youth is confident of a sufficient career; and the patriarch, reposing on his honours, and receiving the reverence of a new generation, still hopes to add more years to the winter of his age. The uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death, operate, independently of the rapid efflux of time, to teach humility to the human heart.

Strictly speaking, however, life is incommensurable with length of days and the flight of seasons. We do not sail over life's solemn main with the uniform velocity of an astronomical rotation. If the log be thrown over from time to time into the current of life, we shall observe great variation in the number of knots per hour that we make; and in order to determine the space traversed, we must calculate the rate of progress as well as the duration of the voyage. How much of our course do we pass over in half an hour? It may be, we float but lazily upon the sluggish waters; it may be, we bound along before the breeze of passion. Half an hour waiting for the train, half an hour in the society of a brilliant woman, half an hour on the eve of battle, half an hour with a guilty conscience, half an hour with the reward of virtue, half an hour with half a hundred other thoughts, persons, and things, cannot be reckoned as equal elements of what we call our life. We might as well estimate quantity of electricity by the duration of the lightning's flash, or the cubical contents of ocean by the beating of the surge. Days are but the ripples of the sea of life, and years its long heaving swells.

The astronomical clock does not mark the epochs of existence, else why should we 'count the gray barbarian less than the Christian child.' The truth is, time is no more a correct measure of life than of light, heat, or magnetism. It measures the duration of an external phenomenon with reference to other phenomena also external, but not with reference to subjective feeling. Neither the quantity nor quality of our vitality can be estimated by the lapse of time. Life can only be rightly measured, in quantity, by the succession and number of ideas; in quality and intensity, by their nature and degree. Estimated by this rule, which of them shall we say has lived the most—Milton or Methuselah, Newton or Old Parr, Shakspeare or Jenkins, Alexander von Humboldt or the eldest of the last list of centenarians recorded by the *Blankshire Chronicle*? A modern writer has remarked on the immense amount of thought that soft pulpy mass we call the brain can secrete before its functions cease. Fancy how many folio volumes, double-columned, and in diamond type, would be filled, were we to note down—which Heaven forbid!—the rank and file of ideas, good strong lusty notions, too, that have passed through the cranium of John Smith for the last twenty years! We wish some savant, of an arithmetical turn, would calculate the number of years which would glide away in a persevering endeavour to catalogue, according to the concisest method, the thoughts of an average octogenarian. The letter A of such an inventory would outrival its renowned namesake of the British Museum. All the labours of Hercules would be light as a lady's crochet-work, compared with the enormous enterprise. It is the boast of sanitary reformers, and not without justice, that the average duration of human life in this country has been augmented of late years by better air, food, dwellings, and apparel. We may fairly congratulate ourselves on the fact, although the work of amelioration is as yet only half accomplished. The genius of disease, avoiding the light of science, skulks in our lanes and alleys, and, with God's help, shall be ultimately caught in a *cul de sac*, and restrained with the bounds of His divine authority. We ought to be thankful for what has been achieved; but, at the same time, not disguise from ourselves that the earthly sum of human life is enhanced infinitely more by better mental culture, ready access to hoarded wisdom, rapid and facile interchange of thought, than by the addition of a few uncertain and weary years to the lease of existence. Sanitary improvements supply, as it were, oil to the wheels of life and polish to their centres, or remove obstacles to their free motion, and the wear and tear of the material are thereby diminished; whereas improved culture may be likened to improved machinery. It is the spiritual power-loom by which ideas are fabricated and multiplied with wonderful speed and at inconsiderable cost, while a comely and tasteful pattern is woven into the web of life for the raiment of the soul.

'Art is long, and life is fleeting.' True, Mr Poet, and yet what a spacious edifice of art, science, and learning may be raised in this fleeting life! The mantle of his ancestors does not yet hang too loosely on the stalwart limbs of Prince Posterity. Genius in its hot youth is still able to foray beyond the frontiers of actual knowledge, and bring in spoils from the darkness. The vast amount of good or evil that a short-lived, evanescent mortal can achieve before he passes away, is a continual testimony against grumbling and discontent about the trivial duration of our pilgrimage. Those whose hours are cast away and bear no fruit, will certainly find the term allotted to them brief enough; but if any man labour with a true heart and high purpose, he will generally find, whatever may be his vocation, ample opportunity to accomplish the beneficent ends of his being. Only prodigal and thriftless servants need be reminded how few are the hours of day that remain to them ere the night cometh. If we use a wise economy, thirty years of good energetic action are no mean appanage. There is space enough, Heaven knows, for all industriously 'working in the walls of Time' to build for the indwelling of virtue a temple of good works, or, for its charnel-house, a pyramid of hideous iniquity. What matters it if life be but for a moment, when that moment can contain so much? Why, when a spirit has passed behind the curtain, do we inquire how many years did he wear his mortal coil? Let our question rather be, how much or how little did he live? After all, the heroes of history, thinkers and doers, are not remarkable for longevity. There is no time to waste, but plenty of time to labour, so let every man proceed cheerily on his journey of life, 'without hurry, without rest.'

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXXV.—EL ZORRO.

The new object of dread was a large gun, which had been brought upon the ground by one of those lately arrived. In all probability, it belonged to El Zorro, as it was in his hands we first observed it. It appeared to be a long musket, or elephant-gun, such as the 'roers' in use among South African hunters. Whatever sort of weapon it was, we soon found to our annoyance that it pitched an ounce of lead nearly twice as far as any of our rifles, and with sufficient precision to make it probable that, before the sun had set, El Zorro would be able to pick off our horses, and perhaps ourselves, in detail. It would be half an hour before darkness could screen us with its friendly shelter, and he had already commenced practice. His first shot had been fired. The bullet struck the cliff close to my own head, scattering the fragments of gypsum rock about my ears, and then fell, flattened like a Spanish dollar, at my feet.

The report was far louder than that of either carbine or escopette; and an ejaculation from Rube, as he saw the effect of the shot, followed by his usual ominous whistle, told that the old trapper was not disposed to make light of this new piece of ordnance. Neither was Garey. His look testified to what all three of us were thinking—which was, that this mode of attack was likely to put us in a more awkward dilemma than we had yet been placed in. El Zorro might shoot us down at his leisure. With our rifles, we could neither answer his fire, nor silence it. Our peril was obvious.

The salteador had delivered his first shot 'off hand,' for we had seen him level the piece. Perhaps it was fortunate for us he had not taken aim over a 'lean;' but fortune from that source was not going to favour us any farther; for we now observed Ijurra stick two lances obliquely in the ground, so as to cross each other at a proper height, thus forming as perfect a rest as marksman could have desired.

As soon as the gun was reloaded, El Zorro knelt behind the lances, placed his barrel in the fork, and once more took aim.

I felt satisfied he was aiming at me, or my horse. Indeed, the direction of the long dark tube would have told me so; but I saw Ijurra directing him, and that made me sure of it. I had little fear for myself. I was sheltered sufficiently, but I trembled for the brave horse that shielded me.

I waited with anxious heart. I saw the blaze of the priming as it puffed upward; the red flame projected from the muzzle, and simultaneously I felt the shock of the heavy bullet striking upon my horse. Splinters of wood flew about my face; they were fragments of the saddle-tree. The ball had passed through the pommel, but my noble steed was untouched! It was a close shot, however—too close to allow of rejoicing, so long as others of the like were to follow.

I was getting as 'riled' as Rube himself, when, all at once, a significant shout from the old trapper drew my attention from El Zorro and his gun. Rube was on my right, and I saw that he was pointing along the bottom of the cliff to some object in that direction. I could not see what it was, as his horses were in the way; but the next moment I observed him hurrying them along the cliff, at the same time calling to Garey and myself to follow.

I lost no time in putting my horse in motion, and Garey as hastily trotted after.

We had not advanced many paces before we comprehended the strange behaviour of our companion.

Scarcely twenty yards from where we had first halted, a large rock rested upon the plain. It was a fragment that had fallen from the cliff, and was now lying several feet from its base; it was of such size, and in such a position, that there was ample space behind it to shelter both men and horses—room for us all!

We were only astonished we had not observed it sooner; but this was not to be wondered at, for its colour corresponded exactly with that of the cliff, and it was difficult, even at twenty yards' distance, to distinguish it from the latter. Besides, our eyes, from the moment of our halting, had been turned in another direction.

We did not stay to give words to our surprise; but hurrying our horses along with us, with joyful exclamations we glided behind the rock.

It was not an echo of our joy, but a cry of disappointed rage, that pealed along the line of the guerrilla. They saw at once that their long gun would no longer avail them, and both Ijurra and his marksman were now seen dancing over the ground like madmen. El Zorro's *métier* was at an end.

A more perfect 'harbour of refuge' could not have been found in all prairie-land. As Garey alleged, it 'beat tree-timber all hollow!' A little fortress, in fact, in which we might defy even twice the number of our assailants—unless, indeed, they should wax desperately brave, and try us hand to hand.

Our sudden disappearance had created a new sensation in their ranks. From their shouts, we could tell that some of them regarded it with feelings of wonder—perhaps with emotions of a still stronger kind. We could hear the exclamations '*Carrai!*' '*Carrambo!*' with the phrase '*los demonios!*' passing from mouth to mouth. Indeed, from the position which they occupied, it must have appeared to them that we had gone into the cliff! The separation of the rock from the wall behind it was not perceptible from the plain, else *we* should have perceived it as we rode forward.

If our enemies knew of this outlying boulder, it was strange they had left the way open to so safe a retreat—strange, since it did not correspond with the cunning they had otherwise given proofs of—and yet stranger they should be ignorant of its existence. Most of them were natives of this frontier, and must have frequently visited the mesa, which was one of the 'lions' of the district. Perhaps they had never troubled their thoughts about it. There is no people who take less interest in the rare features of their beautiful country than the Mexicans. Nature charms them not. A Mexican dwelling with a garden around it is a rarity—a lawn or a shrubbery is never seen; but indeed nature has bounteously supplied them with all these. They dwell amidst scenes of picturesque beauty; they gaze over green savannas—down into deep barrancas—up to the snow-crowned summits of mighty mountains—without experiencing one emotion of the sublime. A tortured bull, a steel-galved cock, Roman candles, and the Chinese wheel, are to them the sights of superior interest, and furnish them with all their petty emotions. So is it with nations, as with men who have passed the age of their strength, and reached the period of senility and second childhood.

But there was another, and perhaps a better, reason why none of our adversaries should be intimate with the locality. As my companions alleged, the spot was a favourite halting-place of the Comanches—*they* have an eye for the picturesque—but perhaps the existence of a spring that was near had more to do in guiding the preference of these 'lords of the prairies.' The mesa, therefore, had for years been dangerous ground, and little trodden by the idle curious. Possibly not one of the heroes we saw before us had for years ventured so far out upon the plains.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A PLAN OF ESCAPE.

If our enemies were awed by our sudden disappearance, it was soon robbed of its mysterious character. Our faces, and the dark barrels of our rifles, visible around the edges of the white rock, must have dispelled all ideas of the supernatural. Having hastily disposed of our horses, we had placed ourselves thus—in case of a charge being made—though of this we had no longer any great apprehension; and still less as we watched the movements of our adversaries.

El Zorro continued for some time to fire his big gun—the bullets of which we could dodge as easily as if they had been turnips hurled at us—and the leaden missiles fell harmlessly at our feet. Seeing this, the salteador at length ceased firing, and with another, rode off in the direction of the settlements, no doubt on some errand.

One pair of eyes was sufficient to watch the movements of the besiegers. Garey undertook this duty, leaving Rube and myself free to think over some plan of escape.

That we were not to be attacked was now certain. We had the choice, then, of two alternatives—either to keep the position we were in till thirst should force us to surrender, or attack *them*, and by a bold *coup* cut our way through their line. As to the former, we well knew that thirst would soon compel us to yield. Hunger we dreaded not. We had our knives, and before us a plentiful stock of that food on which the prairie wanderer often sustains life. 'Horse-beef' we had all eaten, and could do so again; but for the sister-appetite—thirst—we had made no provision. Our gourd-canteens were empty—had been empty for hours—we were actually pushing for the *mesa spring* when the enemy first came in sight. We were then athirst; but the excitement of the skirmish, with the play of passion incident thereto, had augmented the appetite, and already were we a prey to its keenest pangs. We mumbled as we talked, for each of us was chewing the leaden bullet. Thirst, then, we dreaded even more than our armed enemy.

The other alternative was a desperate one—now more desperate than ever, from the increased number of our foes. To cut our way through them had no other signification than to fight the whole party hand to hand; and we regretted we had not done so when only eleven were opposed to us.

A little reflection, however, convinced us that we were in a yet better position. We could make the attempt in the darkness. Night would favour us to some extent. Could we succeed by a bold dash in breaking through their deployed line, we might escape under the friendly cover of darkness, and the confusion consequent upon the mêlée.

There was probability in this. The boldest was clearly the wisest course we could pursue. Desperate it appeared. One or other of us might fall, but it offered the only hope that *any* of us might get free, for we knew that to surrender was to be shot—perhaps worse—*tortured*.

We had but faint hopes of a rescue; so faint, we scarcely entertained them. I knew that my friends, the rangers, would be in search of me. Wheatley and Holingsworth would not give me up without making an effort for my recovery; but then the search would be made in a different direction—that in which I had gone, and which lay many miles from the route by the mesa. Even had they thought of sending to the mound, the search must have been already made, and the party returned from it. Too long time had elapsed to make any calculation on a chance like this. The hope was not worth holding, and we held it not.

For some time, Rube and I thought in combination, canvassing the details of the plan that had offered. After a while, we stood apart, and each pursued the train of his own reflections.

I declare that in that hour I had more painful thoughts than those that sprung from the peril of my situation; this I solemnly declare.

I have already said, that when I first recognised the leader of the guerrilla, I experienced an unpleasant suspicion. Since then, I had not time to dwell upon it—self-preservation engrossing all my thoughts. Now, that I found more leisure for reflection, the dire doubt returned in full strength, and I bitterly pondered upon it. Need I name the subject of my wretched reflections? Isolina de Vargas!

Knew *she* of this? Knew she that Ijurra was the chief of a guerrilla? Her cousin—sharer of the same roof—she could scarcely be ignorant of it! Who set him on our trail? Oh, bitter thought! was the hunt of the wild-horse a *ruse*—a scheme—to separate me from my command, and thus render it an easier prey to the Mexican guerrilleros? Perhaps my straggling followers were by this cut off? Perhaps the post had been attacked by a large body of the enemy—captured? I was not only to lose life, but had already lost my honour. I, the proud captain of a boasted troop, to be thus entrapped by artifice—the artifice of a woman!

My heart, overwhelmed with such bitter fancies, stayed not to reason.

Presently followed a calmer interval, and I began to discuss the probability of my suspicions. What motive could she have to plot my destruction? Surely not from any feeling of love for her country, and hatred towards its enemies? From all I had learned, no such sentiment existed in her mind, but rather an opposite one—a truer patriotism. She was a woman of sufficient aim and intellect to have a feeling one way or the other; but had I not good grounds for believing her a friend to our cause; a foe to the tyrants we would conquer? If otherwise, I was the victim of profound deception and unparalleled hypocrisy!

Perhaps, however, her feeling was personal, not national. Was *I* alone the object of her hatred? Had I done aught by word or deed to call forth her antagonism—to deserve such cruel vengeance? If so, I was sadly ignorant of the fact. If she hated me, she hated one who loved *her*, with his whole soul absorbed in the passion. But no, I could not think that I was an object of hatred to her. Why should she hate me? How *could* she?

I could think of but one motive why she should make herself instrumental in the accomplishment of my ruin. It was explicable only on the presumption that she was attached to Ijurra—that Rafael Ijurra was the lord of her heart. If so, he could easily bend it to his will—for this is but the sequence of the other—could influence her to whatever act.

As for Ijurra, there was motive enough for his hostility, even to the seeking of my life. The insult put upon him at our first meeting—the knowledge that I loved *her*—for I was certain he knew it—with the additional fact that I was an enemy—one of the invaders—of his country. These were sufficient motives, though, doubtless, the two first far outweighed the other: with Rafael Ijurra, revenge and jealousy were stronger passions than patriotism.

Then came consolation—thoughts of brighter hue. In the face of all was the fact, that *the white steed had been found*, and captured! There stood the beautiful creature before my eyes. There was no deception in that—there could be none—no scheme could have contrived a contingency so remarkable.

Ijurra might easily have known of the expedition without *her* agency. Its result he would have learned from the returned vaqueros. He had time enough then to collect his band, and set after me. Perhaps she even knew not that he was a leader of guerrilleros? I had heard that his movements were shrouded in mystery—that mystery which covers the designs of the adventurer. He had served in the school of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna—fit master of deception. Isolina might be innocent even of the knowledge of his acts.

I re-read Isolina's letter, weighing every word. Strange epistle, but natural to the spirit that had dictated it. In its pages I could trace no evidence of treason. No; Isolina was loyal—she was true!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ELIJAH QUACKENBOSS.

While these reflections were passing through my mind, I was standing, or rather leaning, with my back against the boulder, and my face towards the wall of the mesa. Directly in front of me was a recess or indentation in the cliff, carried groove-like upward, and deepening as it approached the summit. It was a slight gorge or furrow, evidently formed by the attrition of water, and probably the conduit of the rain that fell upon the table surface of the mound.

Though the cliffs on each side were perfectly vertical, the gorge had a considerable inclination; and the instant my eyes rested upon it, it occurred to me that the precipice at this point could be scaled!

Up to this moment, I had not thought of such a thing; for I had been under the impression—from what my companions had told me—that the summit of the mesa was inaccessible.

Rousing myself to more energetic observation, I scrutinised the cliff from base to summit; and the more I regarded it, the stronger grew my conviction that, without great difficulty, an active climber might reach the top. There were knob-like protuberances on the rock that would serve as footholds, and here and there, small bushes of the trailing cedar hung out from the seams, that would materially assist any one making the ascent.

While scanning these peculiarities, I was startled by observing several abrasions on the face of the rock. These marks appeared quite fresh, and evidently made by some other agency than that of the elements.

After a short examination, I became convinced that they were marks made by a human foot—the scratches of a strong-soled shoe. Beyond a doubt, *the cliff had been scaled!*

My first impulse was to communicate the discovery to my companions; but I forbore for a while—in order to satisfy myself that the person who had made this daring attempt had actually succeeded in reaching the summit.

Twilight was on, and I could get only an indistinct view of the gorge at its upper part, but I saw enough to convince me that the attempt had been successful.

What bold fellow had ventured this? and with what object? were the questions I naturally asked myself.

Vague recollections were stirring within me; presently they grew more distinct, and all at once I was able to answer both the interrogatories I had put. I knew the man who had climbed that cliff. I only wondered I had not thought of him before!

Among the many odd characters in the piebald band, of which I had the honour to be chief, not the least odd was one who answered to the euphonious name of 'Elijah Quackenboss.' He was a mixture of Yankee and German, originating somewhere in the mountains of Pennsylvania. He had been a schoolmaster among his native hills—had picked up some little book-learning; but what rendered him more interesting to me was the fact that he was a botanist. Not a very scientific one, it is true; but in whatever way obtained, he possessed a respectable knowledge of *flora* and *sylva*, and evinced an aptitude for the study not inferior to Linnæus himself. The more surprising was this, that such inclinations are somewhat rare among Americans—but Quackenboss no doubt drew his instincts from his Teutonic ancestry.

If his intellectual disposition was odd, not less so was his physical. His person was tall, crooked, and lanky; and none of those members that should have been counterparts of each other seemed exactly to match. His arms were odd ones—his limbs were unlike; and all four looked as if they had met by accident, and could not agree upon anything. His eyes were no better mated, and never consented to look in the same direction; but with the right one, Elijah Quackenboss could 'sight' a rifle, and drive in the nail at a hundred yards' distance.

From his odd habits, his companions—the rangers—regarded him as hardly 'square;' but this idea was partially derived from seeing him engaged in his botanical researches—an occupation that to them appeared simply absurd. They knew, however, that 'Dutch Lige'—such was his sobriquet—could shoot 'plum center;' and notwithstanding his quiet demeanour, had proved himself 'good stuff at the bottom;' and this shielded him from the ridicule he would otherwise have experienced at their hands.

Than Quackenboss, a more ardent student of botany I never saw. No labour retarded him in the pursuit. No matter how wearied with drill or other duties, the moment the hours became his own, he would be off in search of rare plants, wandering far from camp, and at times placing himself in situations of extreme danger. Since his arrival on Texan ground, he had devoted much attention to the study of the *cactaceæ*, and now having reached Mexico, the home of these singular endogens, he might be said to have gone cactus-mad. Every day his researches disclosed to him new forms of cactus or cereus, and it was in connection with one of these that he was now recalled to my memory. I remembered his having told me—for a similarity of tastes frequently brought us into conversation—of his having discovered, but a few days before, a new and singular species of *mamillaria*. He had found it growing upon a *prairie mound* which he had climbed for the purpose of exploring its botany, adding at the same time that he had observed the species only upon the top of this mound, and nowhere else in the surrounding country.

This mound was our mesa. It had been climbed by Elijah Quackenboss!

If he, awkward animal that he was, had been able to scale the height, why could not *we?*

This was my reflection; and without staying to consider what advantage we should derive from such a proceeding, I communicated the discovery to my companions.

Both appeared delighted; and after a short scrutiny declared the path practicable. Garey believed he could easily go up; and Rube in his terse way said, that his 'jeints wa'nt so stiff yit;' only a month ago he had 'clomb a wuss-lukin bluff than it.'

But now the reflection occurred, to what purpose should we make the ascent? We could not escape in that way! There was no chance of our being able to descend upon the other side, for there the cliff was impracticable. The behaviour of the guerrilleros had given proof of this. Some time before, Ijurra, with another, had gone to the rear of the mound, evidently to reconnoitre it, in hopes of being able to assail us from behind. But they had returned, and their gestures betokened their disappointment.

Why, then, should we ascend, if we could not also descend on the opposite side? True, upon the summit we should be perfectly safe from an attack of the guerrilla, but not from *thirst*, and this was the enemy we now dreaded. Water would not be found on the top of the mesa. It could not better our situation to go there; on the contrary, we should be in a worse 'fix' than ever. So said Garey. Where we were, we had our horses—a spare one to eat when that became necessary, and the others to aid us in our attempt to escape. Should we climb the cliff, these must be left behind. From the top was less than fifty yards, and our rifles would still cover them from the clutch of our enemies, but to what advantage? Like ourselves, they must in time fall before thirst and hunger.

The gleam of hope died within us, as suddenly as it had sprung up.

It could in nowise serve us to scale the cliff: we were better in our present position; we could hold that so long as thirst would allow us. We could not do more within the granite walls of an impregnable fortress.

This was the conclusion at which Garey and I had simultaneously arrived.

Rube had not yet expressed himself. The old man was standing with both hands clutching his long rifle, the butt of which rested upon the ground. He held the piece near the muzzle, partially leaning upon it, while he appeared gazing intently into the barrel. This was one of his 'ways' when endeavouring to unravel a knotty question; and Garey and I, knowing this peculiarity on the part of the old trapper, remained silent—leaving him to the free development of his 'instincts.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

RUBE'S PLAN.

For several minutes, Rube preserved his meditative attitude, without uttering a word or making the slightest motion. At length, a low but cheerful whistle escaped his lips, and at the same time his body became erect.

'Eh? what is 't, old boy?' inquired Garey, who understood the signal, and knew that the whistle denoted some discovery.

Rube's reply was the interrogatory: 'How long's yur trail-rope, Bill?'

'It are twenty yards—good mizyure,' answered Garey.

'An yurs, young fellur?'

'About the same length—perhaps a yard or two more.'

'Good!' ejaculated the questioner, with a satisfied look. 'We 'll fool them niggurs yit—*we* will!'

'Hooraw for you, old boy! you 've hit on some plan, hain't you?' This was Garey's interrogatory.

'Sartintly, I hez.'

'Let's have it then, kummarade,' said Garey, seeing that Rube had relapsed into silence; 'thar ain't much time to think o' things'——

'Plenty o' time, Billee! Don't be so durned impatient, boy! Thur's gobs o' time. I 'll stake my ole mar agin the young fellur's black hoss, thet we 'll be out o' this scrape afore sunup. Geehosophat! how thu 'll cuss when they finds the trap empy. He, he, he—ho, ho, hoo!'

And the old sinner continued to laugh for some seconds, as coolly and cheerfully as if no enemy was within a thousand miles of the spot.

Garey and I were chafing with impatience, but we knew that our comrade was in one of his queer moods, and it was no use attempting to push him faster than he was disposed to go.

When his chuckling fit was ended, he assumed a more serious air, and once more appeared to busy himself with the calculation of some problem. He spoke in soliloquy.

'Twenty yurds o' Bill's,' muttered he, 'an twenty o' the young fellur's, ur forty; an myen—it ur sixteen yurds—make the hul fifty an six; ye-es, fifty-six preezactly. Then thur's the knots to kum off o' thet, though fornenst 'em thur's bridles. Wagh! thur's rope aplenty, an enough over, to string up half a score o' them yeller-bellies, ef iver I gits holton 'em. An *won't* I? Wagh!'

During this arithmetical process, Rube, instead of gazing any longer into the barrel of his rifle, had kept his eyes wandering up and down the cliff. Before he had ceased talking, both Garey and myself had divined his plan, but we refrained from telling him so. To have anticipated the old trapper in his disclosure would have been a mortal offence.

We waited for him to make it known.

'Now, boyees!' said he at length, 'hyur's how we'll git clur. Fust an fo'must, we'll crawl up yander, soon's it gits dark enough to kiver us. Seconds, we'll toat our trail-ropes along wi' us. Thuds, we'll jine the three thegither, an ef thet ain't long enough, a kupple o' bridles 'll help out. Fo'th, we'll tie the eend o' the rope to a saplin up thur on top, an then slide down the bluff on t'other side, do ee see? Fift, oncest down on the paraira, we'll put straight for the settlements. Sixt an lastest, when we gits thur, we 'll gather a wheen o' the young fellur's rangers, take a bee-line back to the mound, an gie these hyur niggurs sech a lambaystin as they hain't hed since the war begun. Now?'

'Now' meant, what think you of the plan? Mentally, both Garey and I had already approved of it, and we promptly signified our approval. It really promised well. Should we succeed in carrying out the details without being detected, it was probable enough that within a few hours we might be safe in the plazza of the rancheria, and quenching our thirst at its crystal well.

The anticipated pleasure filled us with fresh energy; and we instantly set about putting everything in readiness. One watched, while the other two worked. Our lazoes were knotted together, and the four horses fastened head to head with their bridles, and secured so as to keep them behind the boulder. This done, we awaited the falling of night.

Would it be a dark night? About this we now felt anxious. It was already closing down, and gave promise of favouring us: a layer of lead-coloured clouds covered the sky, and we knew there could be no moon before midnight.

Rube, who boasted he could read weather-sign like a 'salt-sea sailor,' scrutinised the sky.

'Wal, old hoss!' interrogated Garey, 'what do ye think o't? Will it be dark, eh?'

'Black as a bar!' muttered Rube in reply; and then, as if not satisfied with the simile, he added: 'Black as the inside o' a buffler bull's belly on a burnt paraira!'

The old trapper laughed heartily at the ludicrous conceit, and Garey and I could not refrain from joining in the laugh. The guerrilleros must have heard us; they must have deemed us mad!

Rube's prognostication proved correct: the night came down dark and lowering. The leaden layer broke up into black cumulus clouds, that slowly careered across the canopy of the sky. A storm portended; and already some big drops, that shot vertically downward, could be heard plashing heavily upon our saddles. All this was to our satisfaction; but at that moment a flash of lightning illumined the whole arch of the heavens, lighting the prairie as with a thousand torches. It was none of the pale lavender-coloured light, seen in northern climes, but a brilliant blaze, that appeared to pervade all space, and almost rivalled the brightness of day.

Its sudden and unexpected appearance filled us with dismay: we recognised in it an obstacle to our designs.

'Durn the tarnal thing!' exclaimed Rube peevishly. 'It ur wuss than a moon, durn it!'

'Is it goin to be the quick-forky, or the long-blazey?' inquired Garey, with a reference to two distinct modes in which, upon these southern prairies, the electric fluid exhibits itself.

In the former, the flashes are quick and short-lived, and the intervals of darkness also of short duration. Bolts pierce the clouds in straight, lance-like shafts, or forking and zigzag, followed by thunder in loud unequal bursts, and dashes of intermittent rain.

The other is very distinct from this; there are no shafts or bolts, but a steady blaze which fills the whole firmament with a white quivering light, lasting many seconds of time, and followed by long intervals of amorphous darkness. Such lightning is rarely accompanied by thunder, and rain is not always its concomitant, though it was this sort we now witnessed, and rain-drops were falling.

'Quick-forky!' echoed Rube, in reply to his comrade's interrogatory; 'no—dod rot it! not so bad as thet. It ur the blazey. Thur's no thunder, dont 'ee see? Wal! we must grope our way up atween the glimps.'

I understood why Rube preferred the 'blazey'; the long intervals of darkness between the flashes might enable us to carry out our plan.

He had scarcely finished speaking, when the lightning gleamed a second time, and the prairie was lit up like a theatre during the grand scene in a spectacle. We could see the guerrilleros standing by their horses, in cordon across the plain; we could distinguish their arms and equipments—even the buttons upon their jackets! With their faces rendered ghastly under the glare, and their bodies magnified to gigantic proportions, they presented to our eyes a wild and spectral appearance.

With the flash there was no thunder—neither the close quick clap, nor the distant rumble. There was perfect silence, which rendered the scene more awfully impressive.

'All right!' muttered Rube, as he saw that the besiegers still kept their places. 'We must jest grope our way up atween the glimps; but fust let 'em see we 're still hyur.'

We protruded our faces and rifles around the rock, and in this position awaited another flash.

It came, bright as before: the enemy could not fail to have noticed us.

Our programme was already prepared: Garey was to ascend first, and take up the rope. He only waited for the termination of another blaze. One end of the lazo was fastened round his waist, and the rope hung down behind him.

When the light gleamed again, he was ready; and the moment it went out, he glided forward to the cliff, and commenced his ascent.

O, for a long interval of darkness!

THE THEORY OF BRIGHTON.

It is a custom among everyday folk to regard a 'theory' as something vague, mystical, intangible, cloudy, evanescent, unpractical, useless—something with which a crazy philosopher amuses himself, despite the pitying contempt of all sober, sensible people. The philosophers, however, understand the word differently; they regard a theory as a method of explanation, a process of reasoning, whereby facts are to be intelligibly associated with, and elucidated by, a particular principle. Thus, there is a theory of the moon, a theory of rent, a theory of equations; and there may legitimately be a theory of roasting or boiling, of tailoring or hair-dressing—not a string of incoherent vagaries, but a consistent and persistent chain of links between facts and a principle which is to explain them. Taken in this sense, then, we ask the reader to join us in an inquiry, whether or not there can be a theory of Brighton.

Is it as a place facing the sunny south, breathed upon by warm winds when other places are bleak and chilly?—is it on account of 'the blue, the fresh, the ever free,' sparkling and dancing in the sunlight?—is it because of the magnificent esplanade or cliff-road stretching for nearly three miles parallel with the shore?—is it for the bathing-machines and the water-nymphs; or for the pebbles and Brighton diamonds; or for the downs on which the Amazons do amble and canter?—is it on account of these, or any of these, that Brighton has a theory? All of them have somewhat to do with the matter; but we wish to draw the reader into an admission that the truth lies yet a little deeper.

Our theory of Brighton, then, is, that this favourite watering-place is a *suburb of London*. It is on this principle or proposition that we build the philosophy of the whole matter.

Everybody knows that Brighton was once Brighthelmstone, a little fishing-village 'under the cliff,' or on the tract of beach under the present chain-pier. Raging winds from various quarters frequently disturbed and destroyed the rickety tenements of the fishermen; and currents driving from the west constantly accumulated heaps of shingle on the beach. Indeed, so exposed was the place, that Defoe, writing in 1724, said: 'Brighthelmstone is a poor fishing-town, old built, and on the very edge of the sea, which is very unkind to this town, and, by its continual encroachments, has so gained upon it, that in a little time more the inhabitants might reasonably expect it will eat up the whole town; about a hundred houses having been devoured within a few years past.'

It was about the middle of the same century that Dr Richard Russell began to talk and write concerning the salubrity of Brighthelmstone, and the availability of the spot to those who needed the healing agency of sea-water. Slowly and by degrees did invalids act upon this advice; but the first decided start for the little old place was when, in 1782, the 'finest gentleman in Europe' made its acquaintance. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Prince Regent, and then King George IV., from that year made Brighthelmstone his summer and autumn residence, during a long series of years. To duly accommodate the prince, a 'Marine Pavilion' was commenced in 1784, becoming the nucleus of all that fashion has done for the place in the subsequent seventy years. The Pavilion at first consisted of a circular building, with a lofty dome resting on pillars, and a range of apartments on each side; but to complete the design, wings were added to the Steyne front in 1802; and other additions were subsequently made. When finished, it became the most singular-looking building, perhaps, in England; fantastic and irregular, and belonging to any kind of architecture that the spectator might please to name. Domes, minarets, pinnacles, turrets, and arches stand thickly clustered—a sort of hybrid among Chinese, Hindoo, Turkish, Alhambraic, and Russian architecture, which drew forth sarcastic comments from many a quarter.

When the lustre of princedom thus began to dazzle, Brighthelmstone hastened to tidy itself, to lop off excrescences, to deck itself with new ornaments—in fact, to become Brighton. Until 1793, the open space called the Steyne was a piece of common land, whereon fishermen were wont to repair their boats and dry their nets; but gentility forbade the continuance of such rude work on such a spot. It was by degrees enclosed with railings, planted with trees and shrubs, and bounded east and west by private houses of substantial character. At a later day, a statue of the presiding genius of the place, George IV., from the chisel of Chantrey, was erected on one part of the Steyne; and still more recently, another part was decked with a 'Victoria Fountain' of very ornate appearance. Brighton now became ambitious; it put forth claims to be a watering-place and port available for steam-vessels. There was no convenient landing-place; and it was thought that if a pier were carried out into deep water, steamers, as well as smaller craft, might be accommodated. They were days in which suspension-bridges were regarded as wonders of mechanical construction; consequently, Captain Brown's 'chain-pier at Brighton,' finished in 1823 at a cost of L.30,000, was long a subject of pride and admiration to the townsmen, and, it may be added, still longer a source of loss to the shareholders; for it suffered in many gales, and has not sufficed to attract steamers to an exposed and very shoal beach. In more recent times, it has been little other than a lounge and promenade for visitors.

Passing over all those matters which can be learned from any guide-book, and which need not occupy space or attention here, we come at once to this point—that the theory of Brighton does not rest on royal favour. George the Magnificent passed away; and during William's reign, the Pavilion was in a doubtful state, scarcely certain of its own position. When Victoria became queen, and hastened from one to another of her palaces to see which she liked best, she quickly decided against Brighton; a water-side palace, shut out from the sea by intervening houses, and with no windows to look out upon anything worth looking at; a town in which she could not walk to the cliff or the beach without being surrounded by a gaping crowd—these things did not please a young girl who had ever been fond of scenes of natural beauty. The maiden-queen of 1837 refused to make the pavilion one of her residences; and the matron-queen of 1856 keeps equally aloof from the place. There is not a pleasure-town in the kingdom from which the sovereign more completely holds aback; and so evidently was this abandonment a settled thing, that the crown has sold the Pavilion to the corporation for L.53,000, to be used henceforth for holding concerts, assemblies, fêtes, &c.

No, the sunshine of royalty does not afford the explanation; we must go back to our suburban theory. In the stage-coach days, when the Pavilion had not yet lost all chance of remaining a royal palace, Brighton was a pleasure-town for the high-born and wealthy. The distance from London, covered by a brisk six hours' drive, was the shortest to any point on the sea-side, and was enlivened by a breezy passage over the downs. Brighton was, however, an expensive place for the middle-classes, who rather took the packets down the river to Gravesend and Margate. Meanwhile, the townsmen, mindful of the requirements of aristocratic folk, did their best to supply Brighton with all the needful accommodation. They built a sea-wall along the east cliff, 60 feet high by 18 feet thick at the base, to resist the ravages of the sea, and form a basis for one of the finest carriage-drives in the kingdom; and profitably was the sum of L.100,000 thus laid out. They built a Marine Parade, or succession of fine terraces, eastward of the Steyne; and still beyond this a group of magnificent houses called Kemp Town. They stretched the sea-front in like manner westward, until it met the once distant village of Hove; and then overpassed it with the now growing Cliftonville. And this long sea-line of nearly three miles is marked by such an array of squares, crescents, and terraces, as no other sea-side town in the British dominions can equal. They—that is, the townsmen—did all that townsmen could do to provide the lazy luxuries for sea-side pleasure-seekers—baths, bathing-machines, club-houses, news-rooms, bazaars, music-rooms, a theatre, an assembly-room, a race-course, regattas, and so forth. Under the influence of these various attractions, Brighton grew amazingly. In 1801, its population was only 7337; these numbers augmented to 12,012 in 1811, to 24,429 in 1821, and to 40,634 in 1831.

Then came the railway-days, which frighted the builders of the splendid mansions and terraces. A fear was entertained that the cheapening and facilitating of access to Brighton would drive away the noble lords and right honourables, by attracting those of humbler rank and smaller means. If Brighton had been a hundred miles distant from the metropolis instead of fifty, it would be hard to say what effect the railway might have wrought; but it is just because fifty miles is a *suburban* distance, measured by railway standard, that Brighton has assumed a character to which, perhaps, there is no parallel in Europe, in a town of 50,000 or 60,000 inhabitants.

Let us see how this is. During the busy season, there are twelve or fourteen trains per day from London to Brighton, and about an equal number in opposite directions. The road being direct, and the locomotive service good, the time of transit has been gradually lessened, until it averages little more than an hour and a half. Any Londoner can go and enjoy a day's pleasure, or transact a day's business, at Brighton, and return to the metropolis on the same day. Any Brighton resident can make London the scene of his daily business, and return to Brighton in the evening. The lady of fashion and fortune, without employing her own horses and carriages on a turnpike road, could leave London after a drawing-room at the palace, and reach Brighton to dinner, if so disposed. Her noble spouse might, at a pinch, leave Brighton after dinner, by the nine o'clock evening express, and be in time to vote in the House at eleven; or, reversing the order of things, he might make a three hours' speech in the House early in the evening, and yet be in Brighton to supper. A banker in Lombard Street, or a dealer in tapes and silks in Cheapside, might breakfast in Brighton, start by rail at a quarter to nine, and reach London Bridge station by ten, ready for business. Now, let us remember this—that many of the omnibuses at the outskirts of the metropolis take an equal space of time to reach the Bank. Let the denizens of Kilburn, of Notting-hill, of Kensington, say whether they reach their city premises in quicker time than this Brighton morning express would enable its passengers to do. Active men measure their movements by time rather than by space; they care nothing about the miles; they only look to the cabalistic Bradshaw symbols, 8·45—10·0; they jump in, and leave the locomotive to do the rest.

But it may be said—though the rail thus virtually extinguishes four-fifths of the space, it does nevertheless involve the expenditure of a larger sum of money. This is true, yet not so true as to disturb the man of easy means. The company has been shrewd enough, too, to see the value of a liberal policy. There are season-tickets, and tickets available for two or three days, and daily tickets, and excursion tickets on two days in the week—there are many ways of angling for the fish successfully, because the fish are very willing to be caught. There is a whole body of philosophy in the advertisement so familiar to all eyes: 'Eight hours at the sea-side.' It goes to the root of the matter at once. A town *must* be in the suburbs if we can go thither after breakfast, spend eight hours, and then return betimes in the evening. It brings the sea-water and the sea-breeze almost to our doors; and the whole social machinery of the day is as easily managed as if the distance were five miles instead of fifty.

Let not this be regarded as a baseless estimate—a mere attempt to say something smart at the expense of verity. Changes which go on gradually around us are scarcely measured at their proper value, until we steadily pass our thoughts over an intervening period, and compare (say) 1856 with 1836, or any other definite date. Doing this in reference to the subject of locomotion to and from the metropolis; and bearing correctly in mind the kinds, and cost, and times of travelling before the railway era—it will, we think, be admitted that places forty or fifty miles distant from the metropolis, are, both for social and for commercial purposes, virtually as near as the suburban villages were before that era commenced.

And this is what we mean by designating Brighton a suburb of the metropolis. That town is the nearest point at which the sea can be reached; it has many of the elements of a pleasure-town, of a health-seeking town; and yet you can travel from that town to London more quickly than you can traverse the 'huge wen' from one extremity to another. Nor do we, in saying this, wish to shew homage to that particular town alone. Brighton must, from its geographical position, continue to be the nearest sea-side place to London; but the principle we are endeavouring to elucidate is supported by a multitude of other places—wherever, in fact, cheap railway rides bring a pleasant spot within an hour or two's distance from the metropolis. At Southend and Gravesend, at Erith and Greenhithe, at Lewisham and Sydenham, at Mitcham and Epsom, at Wimbledon, Richmond, Kew, Windsor, Sunning-hill, Boxhill, Chertsey, Hampton, Harrow, Hornsey, Waltham, Epping—at places so numerous that this column would scarcely contain their names—the principle in question is working out its results day by day, and every day yet more and more. *Ten million* passengers depart from and arrive at the London Bridge Railway terminus alone, annually—being those who are carried on the various lines belonging to the South-Eastern and the South Coast Companies. If to these be added the millions presented by the termini at Fenchurch Street, Shoreditch, King's Cross, Euston Square, Paddington, and Waterloo Road, some idea may be formed of the daily outgoings and incomings of this vast mass of human beings. Nor would it be just to omit mention of the river-steamers as contributing towards the same general result. Let those who are concerned in the matter determine whether there be commercial wisdom in carrying passengers from London to Margate for 1s. 6d.; all we have to do here, in connection with the present argument, is to know that such has been the case during the past summer, and that 2000 Londoners have on some days made this voyage. And what is yet more wonderful, perhaps, is the maintenance of a full number of steamers to the very places where the railway accommodation is so complete. During the past summer, there have been nearly twenty steamers between London and Greenwich, making perhaps sixty voyages daily in each direction; and yet the railway trains have also been nearly sixty in number each way. Different companies ran trains to Woolwich, on two railways, one nearly thirty times, and the other nearly sixty times per day, in each direction; in addition to a number of steam-voyages nearly equal to those to Greenwich. Gravesend was supplied with twelve trains per day by one company, and eleven by another, besides several steamers. Up the river, too, the steam-traffic has augmented the accommodation to places served by railways, as well as other places not so served, by the several piers at Vauxhall, Nine Elms, Pimlico, Chelsea, Battersea, Wandsworth, Putney, Hammersmith, Kew, &c.

Theory or no theory, this suburban question is of the highest importance to the wellbeing of the metropolis. Boards of Works and Boards of Health may do what they can, and may do much more than has yet been done; but all their labours would fail to preserve or increase the healthiness of London, if the railways had not furnished to the moving mass facilities for getting away to the green fields and the blue sea. Whether for a day or for a season, it is good to do this; thus the benefit applies, in the end, to all classes but the extreme poor—and they must be poor indeed who, in these cheap days, cannot afford an occasional inhaling of fresh air in the belt of country, fifty miles radius, which now constitutes the suburbs of this huge metropolis.

Perhaps the reader will now admit that there may be such a thing as a theory of Brighton—and that the theory is, that Brighton is one of the suburbs of London.

THREE CHAPTERS OUT OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER II.

JUST at the time when I was about to go to Russia, there came from thence a Mr M——, who had been appointed governor of Yakutsk. When he heard that I was well acquainted with the language and manners of the Yakuts, he sought me out, and made my acquaintance. Although I had very little desire to return, I went back with him to Yakutsk, and this simply because I had the welfare of the Yakuts at heart, and also because I could not fail to remark the strength and vigour of intellect of this new official: at the same time, I had a foreboding that my return would bring forth nothing but trouble and misfortune. The result will shew how correct was this apprehension.

To the south-east of Yakutsk, and at a distance from it of more than 100 kös, is a tract of land called Udskoi, celebrated as a hunting district. The circumference of Udskoi is about 500 kös; it is bounded on the east by the Sea of Okhotsk; on the south, by China; and on the north and west, by Nertschinsk, Olekminsk, and Changangy. The province of Yakutsk is so inordinately large, that this district is looked upon as a remote and desert land; through the whole extent of it there are not more than four or five hundred nomadic Tungouses; yet these, on account of their riches and peculiar condition of life, should not be passed over in silence.

At the time of which I speak, a great number of Yakuts and Russians were in the habit of journeying hither, in order to buy furs from the Tungouses, which they could do at a very moderate rate; and they left their own goods in exchange, for which they charged monstrous prices. This gave rise to so much fraud and oppression, that the inhabitants of Udskoi were almost ruined; and other difficulties added to this, rendered it necessary to send an overseer to Udskoi. I was chosen to fill this situation.

For two months before my departure, I had a great number of documents to write; and this work, together with the preparation for my journey, was only the commencement of the endless trouble that awaited me for the space of a year and a half on my distant travels.

My outfit consisted of three changes of winter-clothing, four changes of summer-clothing, tea, sugar, dried Russian biscuits, meat-pies, guns, gunpowder, and lead, a little rum and spirits, and also meat, and Yakut and Russian butter. All these were packed in leathern bags, each containing two and a half puds (a pud weighs forty-six pounds), or else in wooden chests: after they had been safely covered, so that no water could penetrate the packages, they were bound round with leathern thongs, and divided into so many horse-loads, each load consisting of not more than six puds.

Although it was the month of February, the severity of winter had not begun to diminish. According to an instrument (Reaumur's thermometer) with which the Russians measure the degree of cold, it was below thirty when I left the town of Yakutsk, with the two Cossacks who accompanied me. We travelled as far as Amga—a distance of thirty kös—in sledges drawn by horses. At Amga we packed our luggage on the backs of seven horses, mounted three ourselves, and, accompanied by two guides, proceeded on our journey. The horses were all fat, and consequently full of spirit, so that they would not proceed quietly with their burdens. For this reason, and because we did not wish to overheat them on the first day, we halted at a place not distant more than three kös (thirty versts) from Amga, where we determined to pass the night.

The guides, first of all, unloaded the horses; they then shovelled away the snow, till they came to the hard ground, when they began searching for dry wood. So soon as this was found, and a fire kindled, they filled the tea-kettle and another larger kettle with snow, in order to get water for cooking; and after we had been thoroughly warmed by the tea, they set to work to prepare a place for the night. To begin, they made a heap of small twigs and branches; over this the saddle-cloths were spread, and on the top of all came a bed of bear-skins. After consuming the supper which was prepared for us, we clothed ourselves warmly for the night, and went to bed; the boots, stockings, and gloves which we had taken off, being completely wet, were buried in deep snow, to draw out the moisture. At break of day we rose, and took our clothes out of the snow, where they had been better dried than they would have been in the house, and hastily dressing ourselves, proceeded to wash with snow, shivering all the time. We made tea with snow-water, and then went on our way. In this manner we continued our journey until the snow had melted.

Here I must remark that one of the greatest hardships of a winter-journey is the undressing one's self and going to bed in the freezing cold; and yet the getting up in the morning, throwing off the thick warm covering, and washing with snow, is fiftyfold more intolerable, and that man must have a frame of iron who can endure it without injury to his health.

I never drink strong exciting liquors, and consequently know nothing of their value to other men, but I believe it would be impossible to maintain life on such journeys if it were not for tea. I am not now taking the Yakuts and Tungouses into consideration, for with these people, who are born and bred on the snow, it is a customary thing to travel for two or three days without any food at all.

After journeying four days, we reached the shore of the great river Aldan, opposite that part where to the right the Utchur flows into it. Here we halted at the hut of a Tungouse, who told us that, from the entrance of the Utchur to the place whither we had to travel—an expanse of ten kös—the snow had fallen to a depth of seven spans,* and that it would be impossible to make our way through it. This intelligence caused us great embarrassment, for we had no instructions to alter our course, and that was the only way of avoiding the snow. Had we done so, we should also have been obliged to go round a distance of twenty kös, and for want of fodder, must have given up our horses, and taken reindeer. The loads, too, must have been made smaller for the reindeer, but it was impossible to divide them, as we had no more packing-cases or bags to put them into. Consequently, we resolved to proceed along the river Utchur; and during the two days which we remained in the Yurte, we busied ourselves making snow-shoes. The two horses which were not loaded, we tied up for two whole days without fodder, and on the third we crossed over the Aldan. No sooner had we set foot upon the ice of the Utchur, than the depth of snow began to impede the pace of our horses.

A guide on snow-shoes went first, leading the two unloaded horses; these plunged forwards so that their entire weight was thrown on the hind-legs, and thus they broke through the hard crust that covered the snow. Our horses were tied together, and followed in single file, keeping in the beaten track of those that preceded them.

We travelled in this manner from early morning until night, but with the greatest exertion could not accomplish more than one kös. We were therefore ten days travelling over the ten kös, where the snow lay so deep. During this time, we scarcely ever mounted our horses, for, in consequence of the difficulty they had in keeping their feet or getting on through the snow, it was almost impossible to sit firm in the saddle. Walking, however, produced an insupportable weariness, and for this reason, we, for the most part, laid aside our snow-shoes, and went on foot.

Both banks of the river Utchur consist of perpendicular rocks. At the foot of these rocks there are here and there small ledges above steep, black, crumbling precipices. It is impossible for a heavily laden horse to mount these precipices; so, when we had decided on halting at any place for the night, we used to throw the packages on the snow which covered the ice of the Utchur, and lead one horse after another up the precipice. We then turned them loose to scrape their fodder from under the snow. Sometimes they could not scrape away the deep snow of the forest, and then they ate the twigs and young branches of the willow and birch.

We had scarcely overcome the difficulty which the snow had presented, when a new hinderance appeared. The severity of the cold had forced water out of the rocky banks of the Utchur; it flowed into the river under the ice, which was heaved up by it until it cracked and burst—although twelve or thirteen spans thick—and the water streamed over the surface; so that our horses had to wade up to their knees in water. In some places, this water had frozen over the first ice, and made our way as slippery as glass. It was impossible for unshod horses or reindeer to keep their feet on it; so two of the guides went forward, and made notches in it with their knives and hatchets, and we followed after them on foot. In other places, when we were near the black crumbling precipices, we carried away the dry earth or sand in baskets, and scattered it over the surface of the ice. Nevertheless, every now and then it so happened that there were spaces where no sand was strewn, and no notches had been made; here our sixteen or seventeen horses would slip and fall, the girths break, and the packsaddles and all the baggage be thrown on the ice. The greater part of the day was often taken up in repairing these accidents.

In the course of our journey, we came to some very wonderful mountains. The severity of the winter's cold had forced water from the summits, which was now flowing down the whole side of the mountains and over the glittering ice which covered them. At sunset, when the rays of the cloudless spring sun fell upon these rocks, they seemed like a many-coloured rainbow, or as if set with flaming jewels. At the foot, there was always standing water, which did not freeze.

There is a river of the name of Agna which falls into the Utchur on its left side. Travellers turn to the right, and journey along this river.

It was in the month of April that we reached the Agna; and as we went our way along, we suddenly saw in the distance a black moving form on the bank. At first we took it to be an animal; but, drawing nearer, saw that it was a Tungouse, who sat there weeping. After he had stood up and greeted us in his own fashion, he told us his pitiful tale, as follows:

'When I went into the forest yesterday, I found in many parts of it traces of a herd of wild reindeer; so I went back to my family rejoicing greatly at my good-fortune. I cleaned my gun, and put it in good order. Afterwards, I rested a little, and towards midnight, just when the half-melted surface of the snow is again frozen over, I put on my snow-shoes, and led my dog to the place where I had seen the tracks of the reindeer. I waited here two hours for the dawn to break, and smoked my pipe; then, as soon as the footprints of the reindeer were visible in the morning twilight, I let my dog loose, and followed him, running in my snow-shoes. In this manner I kept up with him for more than a kös, leaping from rock to rock, and springing over stream after stream. At length blood from the feet of the reindeer began to be visible on the fresh frozen snow: and from their faltering pace, it was evident that they were tired out; then I heard the continuous barking of my dog, and knew that I should come up to them in time. But suddenly the bark of my dog was changed to a howl of agony. I started, and my heart beat as though it would have burst. I redoubled my speed, and saw before me, at the distance of two gunshots, two small black scraps lying on the snow covered with blood. Just at the moment that my dog had come up with a large herd of reindeer, and had driven them into a small brook, where he was keeping them until I came up, by barking and running round and round them—two hungry wolves leaped down the steep side of a rock, and seizing him, one by the head, the other by the body, with one gripe tore him in two. The reindeer had escaped, and were all scattered hither and thither.

'My poor dog was seven years old. He first went hunting with me as a puppy of six months old; and for six years he has never let me know a hungry day. I have been offered five reindeer for him, but would not have parted with him for ten. Yesterday I was rich; now, I am the poorest of men. I know not how I dare shew myself to my family; wife and children expect the dog, to stroke and kiss him, and their tears will make my heart bleed anew.'

I could not help the poor man; so after I had tried to console him with a few kind words—that what is past will not return, and that which is empty cannot be filled again, and that hope in God is surer than anything else—I went on my way.

We travelled forward, leaving the Agna behind us. In our way there stood a high mountain, difficult of ascent, which we had to pass over; and on the other side of it lay the Utchur. When we were within two kös of the mountain, we met many travellers journeying together; and they told us that the snow lay upon it thirteen spans deep, so that it was quite impassable. However, when we had reached it, our people got together about ten horses and ten reindeer from these travellers, and then unloading, proceeded to lead them up the steep side of the mountain, thus breaking through the crust of snow. They themselves were furnished with snow-shoes.

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* The span of the thumb and middle-finger.

On the following morning, we all, with great difficulty, passed over the mountain.

On the 1st of May, we arrived at the yearly market of Udskoi. At this place of general resort, I collected the yasak, and fulfilled other imperial commissions; then, after resting the horses, which were completely worn out, on the 1st of June we started for Udskoi, taking with us the ten reindeer which we had bought.

The distance from the place of meeting on the Utchur to Udskoi is about fifty kös, but on account of the difficulty of the road, it is reckoned at seventy. The traveller passes from one stream to another, from one river to the next, and climbs mountain after mountain. As it was the rainy season, we had to make the horses and reindeer swim across the rivers; many of them we crossed by the help of a flat-bottomed boat which we built. The ground we passed over was covered with sharp-pointed stones, or else consisted of fathomless mud-holes, never dry.

If once a horse fall into the mud, it can scarcely get out again alone. Our seventeen horses, with their packs, fell in one and all. The guides, wading up to their waists in mud, dragged off the baggage, and piled it up in a dry place; then they made right anything that was broken by the plunging of the horses in the mud; and when these had got out, they were loaded anew. Perhaps they had scarcely gone on for twenty yards, when they would fall in a second time, and the guides had all their trouble over again.

Once, as I was standing up to the waist in mud, holding up the heads of three horses which had fallen in, lest they should sink and be suffocated, a fourth, which could not keep its footing, fell in near me. His head was under two or three times only, but he was dead before any one perceived it. These difficulties were increased by the frightful heat of the sun, and by such myriads of flies, that we could not breathe for them. They swarmed about us especially during meal-time; and no sooner was anything poured into a cup, than they fell in and filled it, even in the moment that you were lifting it to your mouth.

I must give the Yakut guides the well-merited praise of encountering all difficulties without shewing the least ill-temper or dissatisfaction; and yet they do their work for a small sum of money, which does not half repay them for their trouble. And here, in passing, I must make a few remarks on the qualities of these guides. After one of them has completely exhausted his strength during the day by struggling with all kinds of difficulties—mud, water, the heat of the sun, mosquitoes, wasps, and gadflies—he sets to work at midnight to mend his own clothes, and any of the harness that may be broken. By the time this is completed, the horses are cool; he then ties their legs together, and turns them loose to graze; but every half-hour he goes out to see that they are not caught in the bushes, or devoured by any wild beast, so that he never has more than two hours' sleep out of the whole twenty-four.

After we had travelled about ten kös beyond the Utchur, we came to a mountain of the name of Dschugdschur, or the great mountain, which we had been long expecting to reach. It is called the girdle or backbone of the country, because it runs through the whole length of Siberia, reaching over an extent of many thousand kös without a single break, until it reaches the ice of the Arctic Ocean, where it slopes down to the level of the sea, and terminates.

We reached the foot of this mountain-chain just after mid-day, so we halted for the remainder of the day and through the night, that our horses might have time to rest. On the following morning, before sunrise, the horses were saddled in a new fashion, one of the girths being fastened across the breast, and the other round the body, close to the forelegs. In the meantime, we prepared to ascend the mountain on foot. The horses followed, one after another, treading warily and cautiously, so that not one of them was caught in a thicket, or slipped into a crevice of the rock, or a hollow filled with water. If they had made a single false step, they would have fallen down a frightful abyss, and been crushed so that no bone would have been left unbroken.

After thirteen or fourteen hours spent in the ascent, we found that we had reached the summit of the mountain. Here it was quite cool, and there were no flies and wasps to torment us. We halted two hours, by which time we were nearly frozen with cold. Seen from this point, all the mountains which had previously appeared of a very respectable height, looked like low insignificant hills; and the many broad rivers which have their source in these Dschugdschur mountains, were flowing down the sides in narrow glittering silver threads.

On a wet day, when the rain-clouds hover in the air like fog, they are torn asunder by the summits of the Dschugdschur, and the separate masses float about like porridge of meal and bark. Any one standing on the peak which breaks the clouds, may see how a dew-drop or rain-drop falls on the sharp edge of a stone that lies beneath it; how it is divided into parts, and trickles a scarcely visible droplet down either side. Hence the thought arises, how the drops that trickle down to the east are followed and overtaken by others, until they flow on in a hairbreadth line, and so grow into a murmuring brook, gradually increasing and mingling with other brooklets—the murmuring brook becomes a rushing stream, and at length a mighty river, which loses itself in the boundless, never-frozen Pacific Ocean. Here it is tossed about through countless ages, mixing with the waters of every known sea.

The remainder of the drops of which I speak, take a different direction, and in like manner flow westward to increase the stream of that great river the Lena. Journeying along the course of it, you come to the Arctic Ocean. Here it becomes ice, and forms a barrier which no human thought and no human power can overcome.

A RARA AVIS.

In the city of Damascus—that ancient city whence came Eleazer, the faithful servant of Abraham—that city of narrow streets and riderless donkeys—that eastern paradise, where houris glide about like ghouls under cover of their hideous veils, and keep all their sweetness and beauty for the especial behoof of Blue Beards—that grand resort of straw-hatted travellers with fabulous wealth in gold—even there, O reader, once upon a time, there dwelt a Turk! That, I grant, was nothing uncommon; but then this Turk possessed a slave, which is also no uncommon circumstance, and this slave was outwardly black—so black, that his shadow always left a dark mark upon the wall (at least so tradition says); and what is more remarkable still, he hated falsehood, and loved the truth. Now this, you must admit, if you have any knowledge of an African, was a most astonishing phenomenon; so much so, that, in comparison with it, all the recent discoveries of science sink into insignificance. It is far easier to conceive that the old theory about the composition of the moon, with regard to cheese of a particular colour may be true, than to conjure up a nigger whose only weak point was a stringent adhesion to truth.

Sometimes we hear of what philosophers, or naturalists, or botanists term a *lusus naturæ*—an extraordinary freak in nature, by which a fig-tree produces pomegranates, or an onion-plant yields a potato. Just such another phenomenon was this Selim, the black slave, who had as great an aversion to anything bordering on an untruth, as a timid old lady might have to a rattlesnake. And this, strange as it may seem, was the head and front of his offending, the block in his uneven path through life, over which he was continually stumbling and grievously bruising his shins.

His proprietor—who might have been a descendant of Baron Munchausen, judging from his peculiar failing in the baron's line—often but vainly lamented Selim's veracity. In every other respect, he was the model of what a slave ought to be: docile, obedient, attentive to the smallest wants of his master; none could equal him in replenishing a pipe, fetching a piece of fire, or making a brew of Turkish coffee. But, as is the custom in Damascus, Selim invariably accompanied the Turk on all out-of-door excursions, whether to the gardens to make kief, or to a friend's house to smoke the pipe of repose. As is also the practice, servants and slaves always on these occasions remained in the room, mingling ever and anon, with all due respect, in the current topic of conversation. Hence it arose that, whenever the old Turk indulged in flights of imagination, he was suddenly and unceremoniously checked, and ignominiously exposed, by his slave deliberately giving him the lie.

In vain had the master remonstrated with him; in vain had he punched his head and cuffed his ears; in vain, finding all simple remedies fail, had he resorted to the application of the corbash and bastinado, and even threatened the torture of a red-hot iron skull-cap. Selim, under suffering, always promised submission; but no sooner had the pains and scars of the last chastisement subsided, than he relapsed into a tenfold state of veracity; and the old Turk, outraged beyond measure at being continually thwarted in his hobby, finally came to the determination of selling this incorrigible black, and thus easing his conscience of a most unpleasant mentor.

Accordingly, the public auctioneer of the town was summoned, and the Turk taking him aside, entered into full details as to the character and capabilities of the slave; candidly revealing the real cause of his dissatisfaction with him, and urging the necessity of his being disposed of at any price offered by the first bidder.

Selim was accordingly transferred to the slave-market; but, for some reason or other—very possibly a knowledge of his failing had got wind—purchasers, though they paused to look at him, passed on, and made no offer.

At last, one pleasant-looking old Turkish effendi, struck by the intelligence of Selim's face, and the goodly proportion of his limbs, paused and inquired the price. The auctioneer fixed upon a sum so absurdly beneath the current value of like saleable goods, that the old effendi was startled, and begged to be informed as to the failing of the slave. The auctioneer acknowledged that he had one great failing, but that he was not at liberty to state what that was until after the bargain was closed.

'Does he steal?' asked the effendi.

'No; as honest as an ulema.'

'Does he drink then?'

'No; as sober as a dervish.'

'Is he indolent and lazy?'

'On the contrary, as active and as nimble as a flea.'

'Not steal, not drink, and not lazy. Why,' muttered the effendi, 'there cannot be much wrong with the slave who is free from these failings.'

Accordingly, the bargain was soon concluded; and when the auctioneer told him the real state of affairs, the old effendi congratulated himself mightily, and chuckled over the prize.

'Ilhumdel' Allah!' quoth he, 'lying is a thing I detest; and most assuredly this slave will never have occasion to correct.'

Selim being conducted home to the house of his new master, and there duly installed, was summoned into the effendi's presence.

'Selim,' said he, 'I am aware, as you know, of the cause of your late master's dissatisfaction, but as I abhor all deviation from the truth myself, I have but little to fear from your propensity. I wish you to understand, however, that, on the other hand, I never brook any impertinent contradiction from my slaves—not even when I am alone, much less in the presence of strangers. Now, bear this in mind, for disobedience will be visited by punishment, to which all you have hitherto suffered will be mere flea-bites.'

The unhappy negro, who entertained a very keen recollection of the last hundred and fifty stripes, winced terribly at the information; when, to encourage him, his master proceeded:

'If, on the other hand, I find you act up to my wishes, I promise you a complete new suit of the finest cloth, with red cap and slippers to match—such, mashalla! as no other slave in Damascus ever sported.'

This was touching upon a very tender chord with Selim; if he had one great weakness, it was the love of dress. He was, like most of his ugly countrymen, who the more intensely black and distorted they are, are the more puffed up with inconceivable vanity; so he mentally determined to make one strenuous effort to overcome his awful propensity.

For some time, things went on smoothly enough, though the slave very soon discovered, much to his regret, that his new master, notwithstanding all his assertions to the contrary, was a tolerably good hand at drawing the long-bow. Nevertheless, the inducement to silence was a great one, and Selim managed to bottle up his effervescing truth for a considerable interval. The clothes were almost within his grasp.

One day the effendi was invited out to a dinner at some great Turk's, and, having duly warned the slave, went at the hour appointed. It was a very great affair indeed, for the windows were all closed, and the Koran hidden under a divan-cushion—just for conscience' sake, I suppose. Then these sons of Islam made great havoc with half-a-dozen bottles of the strongest spirits, which they, after a manner, diluted by eating an unconscionable amount of raw cucumbers and salt. After that, a sumptuous dinner was served, and partaken of. Then came pipes and coffee; and under all these combined influences, the usually silent tongues of the assembled effendis relaxed into garrulous conversation.

The topics were various, but diverged gradually into the one channel of self. Whether it was the spirits, or the cucumbers, or the good dinner that did it, I am unable to say; possibly, under their combined influence, the usual precaution of the slave's master was forgotten, and he felt himself puffed up with pride, and labouring under the notion that he possessed fabulous wealth—which was a sad hallucination.

After various startling assertions on the part of others, Selim's master, who had lately erected a low shed, proclaimed very pompously that he had lately built a house which was at least forty yards long!

Hereupon Selim, who was standing exactly in front of him, and who could not possibly swallow this enormity without bursting, began twitching his hands and undoing the buttons of his tight jacket after a most alarming fashion, which not only attracted the notice of strangers, but very much terrified his master.

After a brief and awkward pause, one of the party returning to the charge, begged to be informed of the breadth of this new building.

'Two feet!' replied the conscience-stricken effendi, much to the astonishment of his listeners. This assertion pacified any qualms that Selim entertained; but the host inquired innocently what such a building might serve for.

'Why, you see,' said the effendi, 'I had fully intended building a house as broad as it was long, but that scoundrel of a slave there thwarted me in my purpose, and instead of a *Château en Espagne*, I have been obliged to content myself with a brick-wall.'

This restored immediate good-humour to the party; and Selim astonished himself and the natives by appearing next week in his promised suit of finery.

A WALK IN WATLING STREET.

Whilst in Shropshire during the past autumn, I resolved to put in force an old intention, and visit Wroxeter—the Uriconium of the Romans. I had first repaired to the museum in Shrewsbury, to see if any relics were preserved there of this once considerable city. I found some few, but, what was of more account, a most intelligent friend in one of the curators —I chatted the matter over, and agreed to visit the old Roman site together. We fixed the morrow—a day in the end of September—and for starting, the hour of noon.

It should have been an earlier one, considering the lengthened walk which lay before us, and what we had to see; but from the meagre accounts I had read, and from what little had been told me, I fancied our antiquarian labours would be summed up when we had looked at the celebrated fragment of the old Roman wall, and sought for a few coins in the cottages of the surrounding peasantry. I was thus wholly unprepared for the extent, variety, and massiveness of the remains; the fragments of pottery, broken shafts, pediments, and bases of columns, colossal heads sculptured out of the coarse red sandstone of the district, portions of friezes, and much other fragmentary evidence of a considerable city, a civilised people, and extensive public buildings that were adorned, if not in the highest style of art, at least with some skill, and with the well-known taste of the conquerors of the world.

It was two o'clock before we could manage to start. Then with light hearts, and much enthusiasm as to the purpose in view, we set out from the good old town of Shrewsbury; over the Severn, past the old abbey, and so away till nothing but the country lay around us, bathed in the splendid glory of the autumn afternoon. At the distance of about two miles from the town, we came again in sight of the Severn, now rolling far below the steep road-bank; the other shore more level, and stretching away in picturesque undulating meadowland, to the fine woods about Haughmond Abbey. On this bank we rested for a time, the heat being extreme; and a more lovely spot for a 'traveller's rest' we could not have chosen, had we searched England through; for the noble river, as though conscious of its own magnificence, swept majestically onwards in curves and windings of great width, sometimes dark from excessive depth, sometimes clear as a mirror, where it rolled over gravelly shallows, or purled round tiny islands, formed by the droughts of summer. By and by, we went onwards; again crossed the Severn at Atcham Bridge, where there is another exquisite river-scene, and an old country churchyard dipping thereto, of exceeding picturesqueness and stillness. About a mile beyond, we stayed at one of the lodges of Attingham Park to inquire our way. The woman who answered us pointed to a silvan-looking lane opposite, down which we turned, and were soon in the pleasant shadows of the overarching trees. Some distance down this, we turned at right angles into a lane still narrower, and began to ascend. In a moment or two I stopped, and pointed to the ground. 'We are quite right,' I said; 'this is the Roman road;' and most certainly here was the adamantine floor of concrete and small pebbles which, some sixteen hundred years ago, the many-nationed legionaries had made and trod. It was a fragment of one of the great military ways which crossed Britain from Dover to Chester, and named afterwards, by the Saxons, Watling Street. As we passed on, we could see how it was raised above the adjacent land—as the Roman roads always were—and looking just as I had seen the same great highway twenty times before, stealing its way amidst the solitary hills of northern Shropshire and parts of Radnorshire.

We stayed by a low stile, perfectly garlanded by a wealth of woodbine flowers, to take another look at the splendid river, which here flowing to our right, and almost as wide as the Thames at London Bridge, was decked with wooded as well as lawn-like islands of considerable size. To this the meadows near us dipped by a steep descent, and, altogether, my eyes had never looked upon so splendid a scene; for, as in all mountain views, great depth and shallowness lay in contiguity, thus giving effects of light and shade, of stillness and motion, which, in the full richness of an autumn afternoon, a great artist could alone appreciate.

We had already resolved to call upon Mr Stanier, a wealthy gentleman of the district, who possesses some few of the relics preserved from Uriconium, and who exhibited a very good though small collection of Roman lamps and pottery at the meeting of the Archæological Institute in Shrewsbury in 1855. We therefore proceeded to find out his residence, but, presuming it to be more within the village than it was, we passed onwards towards the picturesque church, the spire of which we could see in the distance. Turning my head, as we went by a gate leading into a large level field from which the corn had been newly carried, and on whose opposite side stood a recently erected and somewhat unsightly red brick farmhouse, with extensive outbuildings, something most singular instantly attracted my gaze. In the peculiar light of the waning sun, and as we stood—which was, as it were, sideways to it—this something had all the effect of a vast screen raised against the sky. 'That must be the Roman wall,' said I; 'nothing but *that* could stand out in such marvellous relief!' My companion dissented; but still retaining my opinion, we proceeded, and soon learned that we must retrace our steps, as we had already passed Mr Stanier's residence. As we did this, again the gigantic mass loomed in sight, with an effect upon me the strangest in the world. I could no longer think I stood on the highway of a solitary English hamlet, with the drowsy hush of the autumn afternoon round me; but in city streets, in the precincts of temples, basilicæ, and amphitheatre, and with the mingled tongues of conquerors and conquered sounding in my ears!

Mr Stanier was out shooting, but might be home by and by; Mrs Stanier was an invalid, but she very politely sent a servant with us; and we were soon across the great stubble-field, and in the yard of the new-built farm. My conjecture had been correct; it was the wall I had seen; and here our attendant left us. Another lane to cross, another gate to open, and there, in the midst of an immense field, just cleared from its recent corn, stood the vast mass of imperishable masonry. The field slightly ascends, though not in a degree to be called an acclivity; and up this we toiled, very warm, and very glad to reach such shadow as the wall cast, though that was but slight as the sun then stood.

We sat down upon the stubble and contemplated what was before us. We were not solitary, for though reapers and gleaners were all gone, a man and boy were at work about it, digging a foundation for a slight iron fence, to be put round for its better protection. This had been subscribed for at the meeting of the

Archæological Institute in the preceding year, and stands forth as a creditable exception to the utter disregard generally shewn to our national monuments. This circumstance, simple as it was, was so far fortunate, as it enabled me to judge for myself of the extraordinary character of the soil, as the man had cleared out several holes to a considerable depth. From the top to the bottom of these, indeed wherever he might dig, was the same intensely black mould, pulverised to an extreme degree of fineness, and as free from all extraneous matter, except some few bones, and scattered fragments of the wall, as though passed through a miller's bolting-cloth. I observed the same thing afterwards at some distance from the wall, and in an adjacent lane, and the labourer told me that the same peculiarity extended as far as the surrounding fields.

'You get unusual crops,' said I, 'and in spring can distinguish them by their more intense greenness?'

'Yes, that's all true,' was the answer. 'It's a wonderful piece of land; and just below plough-depth, foundations and ruins lie as thick as can be. The soil's been cleared for farming, that's all.'

I then asked if the cause of this dust-like fineness and richness could be accounted for, but the man shook his head; and after picking up for me some few pieces of the imperishable tiles—of which there are three courses in the wall—he resumed his spade. Unless artificially prepared—a thing scarcely possible for such a depth and extent of land—fire on more than one occasion must have performed an important part in this attrition of the soil, and in reducing its original elements to a state of carbon. It is certainly not unusual to find the lower levels of Roman sites indicating, by the blackness of the soil, traces of extensive conflagration, and countless instances are known to antiquaries; it is only in connection with extreme friability and dryness that the fact here assumes a new and singular aspect. The city was a very extensive one, and a fire may have wasted it for many successive days, and brought down together, in one smouldering heap, both public buildings and domestic dwellings; the profusion of wood-work, which, as it is generally assumed, formed the upper portion of Roman houses, aiding the devastation.

So many conjectures have been made relative to the class of building to which this massive old fragment of masonry may be referred, as prove that antiquaries are entirely at fault. By some it is said to have formed part of a *castrum* or citadel, by others variously as the fragment of a temple, a public granary, or a bath. But there seems little to strengthen the conjecture that it ever formed portion of a citadel, as it does not stand immediately contiguous to the Severn, or any assumed point of defence; though the masonry bears certainly a great likeness to what remains of the Roman castrums on the coast of Kent, being stone-work with layers of tiles between at regular intervals. For centuries, moreover, this almost imperishable fragment has been styled by the peasantry of the neighbourhood, 'the old works;' thus pointing to a Saxon nomenclature, and to its traditional use as a military defence.

Be this as it may with respect to its history, there I paced round and round it, on that golden afternoon, very full of thought, and deeply interested. It was plain to see that the old masonry had formed part of an interior wall, and had trended with some building in a somewhat circular form. In the upper portion are holes through it, as though for the support of scaffolding; other brickwork has rested against sections of the lower part, and what is now a mere broken gap through the middle of the wall, has once evidently formed an arch. Two others were distinctly visible about 180 years ago.

Bringing our tiles with us, we left the old wall, and repaired to the cottage of the labourer I had just been talking to—his wife having a few old coins in her possession, which he had picked up from time to time. These have been found in large abundance on the site of Uriconium; but from what I could hear, and have seen, they have been mostly of comparatively little value—simply small bronze denarii of the period of the lower empire. Occasionally, larger specimens have been found, as one in brass of the reign of Trajan, imbedded in the old wall; but the hoards said to be possessed by many of the villagers have little intrinsic value in relation to either Roman art or history, beyond what association may create, or what the spirit of a kind of Jonathan Oldbuck sort of dilettanteism—namely, a reverence for everything *because* it is old—may impart. With this phase of antiquarian taste, I have not the remotest sympathy; I only value archæology for its power of throwing new light on the historical past; and for shewing, with all its gaps and lost links, how continuous has been the thread of a progressive causation in human history. There can be no doubt that it is these historical bearings that is making archæology the popular study it is at present. Till men have given finality to much of historic truth, this must continue to be the case; and this finality seems to be a very remote thing in relation to British history. Since the publication of the Faussett papers, under the editorship of Mr Roach Smith, our greatest Saxon scholar has said that he must in a large measure re-write his well-known Saxon history, as the discoveries made in Saxon graves wholly invalidate many of his theories and assumptions. In like manner, other discoveries will serve to overthrow much which at the present date is miscalled history; and there can be but little doubt that when the archæologists have done a portion of the work which lies for them to do, there will arise—as there always arises when a point of the kind is needed—a special class of inductionists to draw the threads of historic truth together.

When we had chatted a while, the good woman went upstairs, and bringing down a little strip of rag tied about with cotton, produced her 'dinders,' as they are locally called. They were very small; of bronze, much worn, and oxidised. Selecting one, with the inscription illegible, but with the head of a helmeted soldier thereon, very good in its way, and as fresh as though newly from the mint, I made it mine, and we then retraced our steps a short distance in the village, the waning sun giving us warning that we had much to see, and but a brief time for so doing.

Once in the highway and amid scattered cottages, it was plain to see to what use the ruins of Uriconium had been turned. In the walls and porch of the most picturesque of village churches were to be seen fragments of Roman tiles; better-class dwellings, labourers' cottages, pigsties, garden-walls, and the enclosure of a piece of waste land—itself heaped up with Roman débris—had been alike built out of the same exhaustless quarry; and masses of finely shaped stone-work, which needed no near inspection to shew the still fresh traces of the legionary's gauge and chisel, bounded the road or secured a dung-heap. As was said when the members of the Archæological Institute went over the site of Uriconium in 1856, it seemed to be a matter of necessity that every fragment of a column turned up should be split and formed into a coping-stone for a wall.

A message delivered to us in the early part of the afternoon, invited us to see some remains at a gentleman's house next the church. Proceeding thither, we found on the lawn some noble columnar fragments, pediments, and bases, matching evidently with fragments of the same kind that we saw almost immediately after in the grounds of Mr Stanier. Some of these masses were decorated with a scale pattern, others with the ordinary flute. A portion of these were placed about a large centre flower-bed, redolent of the scent of geraniums and heliotropes, where they supported fragments of Samian ware—none of it, though, of very high quality—broken lamps, Roman glass, and other kinds of pottery. It was singular to find fragments of vessels of the black ware called Upchurch pottery at this remote distance from the banks of the Medway; and the fact shews how intimate and constant was the commercial relation between one part of Roman Britain and another. This black hue was effected during the process of baking, and might not have been peculiar as a branch of ceramic art to the Upchurch potteries solely, still both pattern and shape gave additional evidence. My own idea is, that the Staffordshire potteries date from a Celtic period, and that in the hands of the Romans, they were extensively worked, and supplied the adjacent districts with a profusion of earthen vessels, that has had no parallel except in our own day. The most unique relic was a red-earth vase of large size, of coarse workmanship and clay, but most rare as to shape. I have seen nothing like it elsewhere, and yet it was undoubtedly Roman; and what has since struck me as very singular, might have almost served Wedgwood as a model for one of his peculiar shapes. It is a well-known fact, that our illustrious English potter was intimate with several of the best antiquaries of his time, and occasionally received presents of Roman ware from Major Rooke and others. Thus, from some source of the kind may have arisen the flanged rimmed vase peculiar to collections of Wedgwood-ware, and so common on shelves and mantel-pieces sixty years ago.

The evening had waned more and more, and twilight was almost come; we therefore gave up all hope of seeing more of the village, and retraced our steps to Mr Stanier's. That gentleman had not returned, so I had the misfortune of losing the sight of his small but unique collection of pottery. In a *mortarium* in the hall were a few fragments of various-shaped vessels; through these I looked as well as the fading light would let me, and then hastened to the lawn. Here, set about in various places, were still more beautiful fragments of pillars, with their bases and pediments, than any we had yet seen, besides many other massive relics in sculptured stone-work. A sort of alcove on one of the winding terraces leading down to the river was entirely formed by the latter; whilst above it, almost covered with ivy, was set a colossal head of one of the Roman deities.

The scenery from this lawn and its terraces is beautiful in the extreme; nothing that I have ever seen of English landscape exceeds it. As I turned away in the softened twilight, the last traces of the sun lying here and there in molten patches on the water and its green-turfed islands, I could but think how, after all, the beauty of nature transcends the art of man; and that if, through the mischances of barbarism and ages of ignorance, treasures were lost to us that neither time nor conjecture could restore, the same magnificent environment was still ours as had witnessed the civilisation of our Roman fathers.

Along Watling Street, through the gloom of the wooded lane, we reached the highway. At Atcham Bridge we were fortunate enough to be overtaken by a return chaise: by the aid of this we reached the cheerful light of the town much earlier than we should otherwise have done.

The relics discovered from time to time of Uriconium have been considerable, though too many of them have been scattered and lost. The compass of the city and fortress was about three miles, and within a space such as this, accident, if not research, must have brought countless things to light. Sepulchral remains, hypocausts, moulds for forging money, an oculist's stamp, have been among the spoil. A few small bronzes have been found, but from the accounts that have reached us, and from what I have seen, they belong to a debased stage of art. The best things preserved in the museum at Shrewsbury is an altar, formed of the red sandstone of the district. The specimen of a sepulchral urn, enclosed in a case of lead, is likewise most unique and rare.

HUMBOLDT AT HOME.

Mr Bayard Taylor has communicated to the *New York Tribune* some very interesting details of a visit he paid to Alexander von Humboldt in November last. While in Berlin, the philosopher lives with his servant Seifert, whose name is on the door of the house, a plain two-story building, with a dull red front, and inhabited by several families. On the second floor there is another name—'Alexander von Humboldt.' Seifert opened the door to the visitor, and shewed him into a room filled with objects of natural history, then into a library, and lastly into the study.

'Seifert went to an inner door, announced my name, and Humboldt immediately appeared. He came up to me with a heartiness and cordiality which made me feel that I was in the presence of a friend, gave me his hand, and inquired whether we should converse in English or German. "Your letter," said he, "was that of a German, and you must certainly speak the language familiarly; but I am also in the constant habit of using English." He insisted on my taking one end of the green sofa, observing that he rarely sat upon it himself; then drew up a plain cane-bottomed chair and seated himself beside it, asking me to speak a little louder than usual, as his hearing was not so acute as formerly.

'The first impression made by Humboldt's face is that of a broad and genial humanity. His massive brow, heavy with the gathered wisdom of nearly a century, bends forward and overhangs his breast, like a ripe ear of corn; but as you look below it, a pair of clear blue eyes, almost as bright and steady as a child's, meet your own. In those eyes, you read that trust in man, that immortal youth of the heart, which make the snows of eighty-seven winters lie so lightly upon his head. You trust him utterly at the first glance, and you feel that he will trust you, if you are worthy of it. I had approached him with a natural feeling of reverence, but in five minutes I found that I loved him, and could talk with him as freely as with a friend of my own age. His nose, mouth, and chin, have the heavy Teutonic character, whose genuine type always expresses an honest simplicity and directness.

'I was most surprised by the youthful character of his face. I knew that he had been frequently indisposed during the present year, and had been told that he was beginning to shew the marks of his extreme age; but I should not have suspected him of being over seventy-five. His wrinkles are few and small, and his skin has a smoothness and delicacy rarely seen in old men. His hair, although snow white, is still abundant, his steps slow but firm, and his manner active almost to restlessness. He sleeps but four hours out of twenty-four, reads and replies to his daily rain of letters, and suffers no single occurrence of the least interest in any part of the world to escape his attention. I could not perceive that his memory, the first mental faculty to shew decay, is at all impaired. He talks rapidly, with the greatest apparent ease, never hesitating for a word, whether in English or German, and, in fact, seemed to be unconscious which language he was using, as he changed five or six times in the course of the conversation. He did not remain in his chair more than ten minutes at a time, frequently getting up and walking about the room, now and then pointing to a picture, or opening a book to illustrate some remark.'

The two travellers talked about the countries they had visited; Humboldt remarking that, like his visitor, he had preserved his health everywhere; and that during five years in South America and the West Indies, he had passed through the midst of black vomit and yellow fever untouched. He gave some advice as to travelling in the Russian-Tatar provinces of Central Asia; and described the

Khirgies as a very interesting people, partly Boodhist and partly Mussulman, their monkish sects following the clans in their wanderings, and performing their religious ceremonies in the encampments within a circle marked out by spears.

The Altai Mountains led him to speak of the Andes, and compare them with the Himalaya, giving the preference to the former in point of grandeur. '"You remember Orizaba," continued he; "here is an engraving from a rough sketch of mine. I hope you will find it correct." He rose and took down the illustrated folio which accompanied the last edition of his *Minor Writings*, turned over the leaves, and recalled, at each plate, some reminiscence of his American travel. "I still think," he remarked, as he closed the book, "Chimborazo is the grandest mountain in the world."

'Among the objects in his study was a living chameleon, in a box with a glass lid. The animal, which was about six inches long, was lazily dozing on a bed of sand, with a big blue fly—the unconscious provision for his dinner—perched upon his back. "He has just been sent to me from Smyrna," said Humboldt; "he is very listless and unconcerned in his manner." Just then the chameleon opened one of his long, tubular eyes, and looked up at us. "A peculiarity of this animal," he continued, "is its power of looking in different directions at the same time. He can turn one eye toward heaven, while the other inspects the earth. There are many clergymen who have the same power."'

The conversation then turned upon American affairs, with which Humboldt appeared to be quite familiar. 'He also spoke of our authors, and inquired particularly after Washington Irving, whom he had once seen. I told him I had the fortune to know Mr Irving, and had seen him not long before leaving New York. "He must be at least fifty years old," said Humboldt. "He is seventy," I answered, "but as young as ever." "Ah!" said he, "I have lived so long, that I have almost lost the consciousness of time. I belong to the age of Jefferson and Gallatin, and I heard of Washington's death while travelling in South America."

'I have repeated but the smallest portion of his conversation, which flowed on in an uninterrupted stream of the richest knowledge. On recalling it to my mind, after leaving, I was surprised to find how great a number of subjects he had touched upon, and how much he had said, or seemed to have said—for he has the rare faculty of placing a subject in the clearest and most vivid light by a few luminous words—concerning each. He thought, as he talked, without effort. I should compare his brain to the fountain of Vaucluse—a still, deep, and tranquil pool, without a ripple on its surface, but creating a river by its overflow. He asked me many questions, but did not always wait for an answer, the question itself suggesting some reminiscence, or some thought which he had evident pleasure in expressing. I sat or walked, following his movements, an eager listener, and speaking in alternate English and German, until the time which he had granted to me had expired. Seifert at length reappeared, and said to him, in a manner at once respectful and familiar: "It is time;" and I took my leave.

'"You have travelled much, and seen many ruins," said Humboldt, as he gave me his hand again; "now you have seen one more." "Not a ruin," I could not help replying, "but a pyramid." For I pressed the hand which had touched those of Frederick the Great, of Forster, the companion of Captain Cook, of Klopstock and Schiller, of Pitt, Napoleon, Josephine, the marshals of the Empire, Jefferson, Hamilton, Wieland, Herder, Goethe, Cuvier, La Place, Guy-Lussac, Beethoven, Walter Scott—in short, of every great man whom Europe has produced for three-quarters of a century. I looked into the eyes which had not only seen this living history of the world pass by, scene after scene, till the actors retired one by one, to return no more, but had beheld the cataract of Atures and the forests of the Cassiquiare, Chimborazo, the Amazon and Popocatapetl, the Altaian Alps of Siberia, the Tatar steppes, and the Caspian Sea. Such a splendid circle of experience well befits a life of such generous devotion to science. I have never seen so sublime an example of old age—crowned with imperishable success, full of the richest wisdom, cheered and sweetened by the noblest attributes of the heart. A ruin indeed! No: a human temple, perfect as the Parthenon.'

GONE.

List to the midnight lone!
The church-clock speaketh with a solemn tone:
Doth it no more than tell the time?
Hark, from that belfry gray,
In each deep-booming chime which, slow and clear,
Beats like a measured knell upon my ear,
A stern voice seems to say:
Gone—gone;
The hour is gone—the day is gone:
Pray.

The air is hushed again;
But the mute darkness woos to sleep in vain.
O soul! we have slept too long,
Yea, dreamed the morn away,
In visions false and feverish unrest
Wasting the work-time God hath given and blest.
Conscience grows pale to see
How, like a haunting face,
My youth stares at me out of gloom profound,
With rayless eyes blank as the darkness round,
And wailing lips which say:
Gone—gone;
The morn is gone—the morn is gone:
Pray.

Wo for the wasted years
Born bright with smiles, but buried with sad tears!
Their tombs have been prepared
By Time, that graveman gray.—
Soul, we may weep to count each mournful stone,
And read the epitaph engraved thereon
By that stern carver's hand.
Yet weep not long, for Hope,
Steadfast and calm, beside each headstone stands,
Gazing on Time, with upward-pointing hands.
Take we this happy sign,
Up! let us work—and pray.

Thou, in whose sight the hoary ages fly
Swift as a summer's noon, yet whose stern eye
Doth note each moment lost,
So let me live that not one hour misspent
May rise in judgment on me, penitent,
But, till the sunset, Lord,
So in Thy vineyard toil,
That every hour a priceless gem may be
To crown the blind brows of Eternity.

M. A. D.

ANTIQUITY OF BLACK-PUDDINGS.

Even black-puddings were not only tolerated, but were fashionable; and when the throat of the ox was, as usual, cut nearly from ear to ear, the blood was caught to make a dish which was thought worthy of figuring in the kitchen of King Remeses. The mode of cutting the throat is still required, by Moslem law, in Egypt; but to eat the blood is unlawful. It was this custom of the country they had just left that made the Hebrew legislator so often warn the Israelites against eating the blood of animals; for while some of the Mosaic laws were in accordance with the patriarchal habits of their forefathers, many were directly introduced in order to correct abuses they had adopted during their sojourn in Egypt.—*Wilkinson's Egyptians in the Time of the Pharaohs.*

'GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.'

Circumstances have obliged us to defer till next week the *Glimpse* prepared for the present Number.

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BY THE BEDROOM FIRE.

I HAVE heard people, in talking of their dreams, tell how there is one particular Appearance that comes over and over again, under some special circumstance; and how, let them do what they will to ward it off, yet so surely as they lie down under the influence of such circumstance, so surely does the same figure arise in the same places, and enact anew the fragmentary drama, never to be finished in this world. When I say 'ward off,' I mean that, just by way of experiment, they sometimes try what power they have to put it aside. I do not wish to infer that they have in general any horror of it; I think, on the contrary, they would be sorry to part with it. It is something so peculiarly their own, that it gives them an importance, resembling that of families who are distinguished enough to have a ghost or banshee; and I am sure they like to tell about it more than anything.

Although I am myself one of these people, I am different from them in a single respect, for I have never yet spoken to any one of a dream I have had for some time now. It was only last night, that awaking from it as the winter storm swept by the house, and wondering whether any one similarly situated had ever experienced anything like it, I determined to set it faithfully down, word by word, just as it happens. It is always in one place this vision comes to me, and at one time—in my own bedroom, sitting in a low chair beside the fire, which, with flameless, palpitating glow, makes a low dream-light in the chamber. Then, when the house is quiet—when the wind goes soughing by—when the little kettle upon the hob makes its low purr—when the firelight is dimly reflected at great depths in the polished dark old furniture—when I have put on a particular white dressing-gown with wide hanging sleeves and loose neck—and when my hair falls down after the fashion of my girlhood—it is then I find myself face to face with this dream-figure. So quietly it steals in, as if it were some invisible limning within my heart which the sacred home-fire drew forth to palpability upon the surface, that I am unconscious when it first comes to me. I can feel it with its little face upon my bosom long before I look at it with my happy dimmed eyes; and it seems to me as if the star arose over my dwelling as it shone from heaven, ages ago, upon the young child and his mother, hallowing for ever since then the holy cradle of a mother's arms.

I am agitated by no surprise when I first see it, and yet my heart beats fast. It seems to me as if all that had ever been pure and peaceful in my own life—all my fancies, all my hopes, all the love I ever felt or could feel, lay concentrated there before me; as if I had no longer anything to desire; as if my very soul, purified, lay calmly sleeping upon my knees. I am sure if I have any distinct feeling at all, it is that I could die for it: whatever else is in my mind, that is uppermost—I could die for it; and as this thought comes, another dream seems to rise within my dream, full of wild, incoherent passions of defence: of struggling with armed men, as mothers did in the days of Herod the Tetrarch—of buffeting with the waves—of being torn by savage animals—of flying with bare and bleeding feet, and streaming hair, through the wild night, and holding it ever to my bosom as my exceeding great reward; for the moment the vision comes, it brings me a fierce strength, such as does not belong to my nature, which is indeed but weak and timid.

From these nightmare fancies I am recalled by a whole series of operations, in which I treat my dream-figure with a familiarity to be accounted for only as a dream inconsistency. I hold him in no more reverence than if he were the waxen baby I used to play at love with. I splash him and puff him; I battle it out with him, with quite a ludicrous sense of my power: the self-assertion of his kicking and crying affords me the most intense amusement through all my flurry. I make no more of compelling his rebellious little fat arms in and out of all sorts of intricacies, than if I were the Brobdignag nurse I read of in the story-book long ago. I will have everything about him my own way—smooth and neat, and folded over and tucked in. I am firm in my notions regarding his figure, and finish him off with three yards of bandage, like a young mummy. I never relax a string in the matter of the night-gown, but overcome him with it like a shower-bath of calico, from which he emerges red and shining, and turn him over on his face with an unsympathising imperturbability that seems almost fiendish in its heartlessness. After this final struggle, I have conquered, and have only to fix my flag of victory upon his head, by inserting it into his little crimped night-cap, which, with all the letting-out of running-strings, is, I am proud to say—I say so to myself—'growing too small for him.' So, the cruel task over, my tender-heartedness returns, and with his little hands wandering about my neck—with the fire-light enwrapping us both in its genial glow—with the kettle singing its low lullaby—with the wind passing on its mysterious course, he sleeps his sweet sleep. 'And they brought young children to Him that he might bless them.' These are the words I always hear as I watch at such a time, addressed, as it were, with something of tender reproach to myself, and telling me that, guided by the little innocent hand, I, too, may come to the golden gate, and receive a share of the blessing.

If there is one thing I am more proud of than another about this dream-darling of mine, it is his feet—always excepting his hair. Indeed, these two points of excellence, belonging to different periods of the dream—for many years lie compressed within the fantastical hour—I rather dwell upon each exclusively in turn. Thus, when first he comes to me, I almost blush to recall the childish delight, the thrill of joy afforded me by the sight and touch of the little rosy warm feet, that have never trodden the wicked earth. How I watch them basking in the genial fire-glow—how I kiss them, and fondle them—how it is happiness enough to hold them both within my one hand, and to feel they live!

A little later, and his hair becomes his strong point—that tiny scrap of silken hair that just emerges from his cap. Never was there such a love-lock! It is smoothed down, parted on either side, parted on one side: there is no end to the fashions this morsel assumes, until it grows beneath my hand, and clusters in thick chestnut curls upon the boy's head. After this, the feet retire into complete obscurity, never being visible out of red shoes, blue shoes, sandalled shoes, and so on, but once—that is, while he is still a little child, and kneeling in his bed-gown, with flushed cheeks and bare feet, at my knees, lisping my name in his evening-prayer.

Soon after this innocent prayer, I cease to see myself. I perceive all that is going on equally well, but I no longer have any connection with the scene: I am oppressed with a dreadful feeling of helplessness, and long to cry out and awaken. With an agony of entreaty, I try to fold the child in my arms, but they restrain him no more than the air. I struggle franticly even to touch him—to speak to him one word—to let him know that his own mother stands beside him. But the wind that goes whispering by bears away upon its wings my dull dumb moanings; the flickering fire-light traces no shadow of my outstretched hands. At this particular passage of my dream, a picture that really hangs in my husband's study always shapes itself out of the thickening shadows. It is one of myself: a pale, sad face, with heavy eyes, not pretty, with no happy smiles and bright bloom, such as win children's love; and as they say to the boy that it is his mother's picture, I could find it in my foolish heart to weep bitterly that the painter had been so faithful—that he had not traced fresh joyous beauty, radiant eyes, and star-encircled hair, so that the boy should think of a guardian-angel whenever he thought of his mother. This is, I think, at once the most sharply defined and the silliest part of my vision; and soberly awake, I am ashamed to know that it is always here my tears flow with an unvarying certainty.

After this, it seems as if the doors that had shut us in together, opened on every side, and admitted strangers, the one who has taken my place in the house, even wearing things that I well know. She is a lady with a stately presence, and with but cold looks for the little ones I see gathering around her, an ill-restrained impatience of the lonely child in the distance. From this I generally fall into a dull torpor of unutterable distress, and see things for some time with all the hurried flitting, meaningless gatherings and dispersings, intangible shifting and general incoherence of dream-scenery: but in them all is the boy. He is a fine manly fellow, with a grand head and proud dark eyes; something about his mouth, too, of almost girlish sweetness, but as he grows up, settled into stern compression. For he grows up in this dream of mine—past the unloved childhood—through the dull school-days, uncheckered by the bright intervals of home, that mark the year to other children with so many distinct epochs of happiness whereby to calculate the flying months—on into his premature manhood; so tall, that it does indeed seem a wild fancy that I could ever have borne him in my arms; so care-worn in this his early youth, that none but a mother's eye could detect the lingering traces of his childhood's innocence and repose.

I do not know my son's age. In this wild confusion of time, it gives me no astonishment to walk with him at one moment a little lad, with open collar and white throat, dusty worn-out shoes and bundle, trudging along the high road, and turning his face from his father's house for ever; and the next, to stand beside him in his poor chamber, a lonely dejected man, over whose head years of disappointment have swept. And from this time I never lose sight of him continuously. By the dying fire-light, in the flickering gleam of his student-lamp, when the wind lifts up its voice and howls like a ravening animal waiting for its prey without—through the dreary nights when, like the Galilean fishermen, he toils in great deeps vainly—then it is given me to stand beside him—to lay my shadowy hands upon his aching head to soothe him, all wayworn as he is with his world-pilgrimage, into rest, to arise in his dreams from the far-off years, and bless him with the holy mother-love.

Here, as I do in my vision, I must stop abruptly. From this point, it seems to me that a mist gradually intervenes between us, making things behind at first vague, and by degrees stealing upon their very outlines, and so blending them into an even darkness. Nor does this fading out of the details of my dream-fancy occasion me pain. In proportion as I see less clearly, the keen sympathy of my interest decreases, and returns from following the fortunes of the child to a mere consciousness of unspeakable love lying dormant within my bosom; and this love brings him back quite naturally, and without mental effort, to my arms, a little, tender, helpless, sleeping thing, just as I see him first. My dream thus always commencing and terminating in the same way, has led me to speak as if it were unvaryingly throughout the same, which is not the case. Indeed, why I should have selected such gloomy circumstances to surround him with, in preference to the many bright and joyous ones I see him as often the hero of, I do not know, except that, unconsciously, I have been influenced by a kind of vanity in setting down those that seemed most romantic amongst my silly fancies, or from the common instinct that makes a child of sorrow dearer to a mother, as I have heard mothers say, than any of her happy ones.

So, with a start, I awake. I am still sitting in the same place, but my fire-light has died into the darkness. It is cold and cheerless. I creep to my bed, and, like Rachel, weep for my children because they are *not.*

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

MANŒUVRING.

SQUATTER sovereignty!—shall it exist or not, is the question which for half a century has perplexed and demoralised American statesmanship, and will do so apparently for some time to come. Calhoun is said to have been the first to use the term 'squatter sovereignty' in joke, though no joke has it proved to congress; but Cass is alleged to have had the high merit of giving it a place in serious parliamentary nomenclature, and so conferring upon it an air of official respectability. We do not absolutely pledge ourselves as to the authorship of either of these distinguished statesmen; nor does it much matter. Squatter sovereignty is no new thing. We have referred to it again and again, as the alleged right of the inhabitants of the newly organised territories of the Union to make choice of their own institutions. How that choice is for the most part a foregone conclusion, as regards slavery, is already explained. An early rush of planters with their slaves usually settles the business, before the more slow-moving and freedom-loving emigrants enter on the scene. Yet, the fiction is still contended for in congress, that the inhabitants are entitled to exercise precisely the same right of assuming or rejecting slavery as are the citizens of any of the constituted states. In short, does the constitution confer on congress an arbitrary control of the territories? The circumstances which have been narrated in these papers, would entitle us to say that congress rightfully possesses this authority.

People who do not keep quite abreast of great social questions, probably imagine that the contest about slavery in the United States refers to emancipation or non-emancipation. Except by the inconsiderable party of abolitionists, the struggle has not got within 'a long chalk' of this ultimatum. The past and present subject of debate, is what is to be done with the territories, which are from time to time absorbed into the Union. The South, which has the knack of carrying statesmen and presidents along with it—no matter where these personages are 'raised'—argues strongly in favour of squatter sovereignty; for the good reason, that it can fabricate pro-slavery squatters to any desired amount. The North, on the other hand, which talks heroically about freedom in its Faneuil Halls, its Tabernacles, and what not, and is clear that at least all territories on the northern side of 36° 30′ should be for ever free from slavery, cuts a poor figure when it comes to voting. In plain terms, it allows itself to be mystified—sends, among a few brilliant exceptions, so many self-interested persons to congress, that all 'who are not identified with cotton or democracy are naturally disgusted' [*]—and thus, to end the matter, the South gets pretty nearly always its own way.

Ever since the battle of the territories began, nearly forty years ago, there has been a continual reckoning of gains and losses between South and North. On our conscience, we believe that the question of slavery has never, as a general rule, been seriously entertained by the great northern orators in congress. The thing which was really fought for—as, for example, in the magnificent speeches of Webster—was political power. If the South, with the peculiar energy it has usually employed, were to secure a disproportionately large number of states, the North would relatively sink in its member-creating capacity; and losing in members, it would lose in chances of place as well as of the many good things which issue from the federal treasury. Unless one is pretty well 'posted up' in the history of these party manœuvres, he can hardly comprehend the actual merits of the squatter-sovereignty discussions.

Slavery, once simply a social and seemingly temporary evil, has, through the course of events, of which we have presented a summary, become a great political institute, within which is intrenched an oligarchy that holds the balance of power, and is, in effect, *the* government. Undoubtedly, the primary cause of this preponderance is the constitution of the United States, which is eminently conservative of slavery, and, as usually interpreted, has afforded grounds for greatly extending this odious institution. In that constitutional arrangement alone, whereby slaves form an element in apportioning the ratio of representative population, a ground was laid for the political aggrandisement of the South. As formerly stated, three-fifths of all the slaves in the United States are numbered in the constituency for the House of Representatives, though not one of them has a vote. Three out of every five slaves in the South, are thus equivalent to three freemen in the North; and practically, by this singular method of making up a constituency, the South gains thirty votes in the House of Representatives beyond what it would otherwise be entitled to have.

It is worthy of remark, however, that, notwithstanding this remarkable advantage, the South is not able to keep pace with northern constituencies. By the last decennial census, on which the present representation is based, while the free states contribute 145 members, the slave states return no more than 90. How, then, being in such a minority, is the South able to exert so extraordinary an influence in the national legislature? The explanation involves some strange disclosures. In the first place, the South uniformly acts with an *esprit du corps* totally wanting in the North. The constituency of the slave states is, in point of fact, narrowed to about 350,000 slave-owners, in whom power is entirely reposed; the surplus of southern white population being little better than a nonentity. A body so limited acts with a vigour and unity not to be attained by the many millions of northern freemen. Throughout the South, free labour is dishonourable, and the business of life is politics: the universal consideration is the attainment and retention of power. The North, on the contrary, is a hive of industry, in which there is little time to devote to political stratagems, and unfortunately the people, generally, are so much under the dominion of material interests, as well as prejudices respecting colour, as to be easily misled by deceptive party representations.

Accustomed as we are to associate slavery and its multifarious horrors with the doings of the South, one is apt to neglect the important truth, that but for the selfish compromises of the North, slavery must long since have been extinct. No fact has been more conclusively proved than that the existence of this monster evil depends on territorial aggression. Seclude it within a certain circle, and it will inevitably perish. Slavery is synonymous with *waste*. It is a waste of means, a waste of land, a waste of civil liberty, a waste of moral feeling—everything deteriorates in connection with it. As an institution, it has drawn its vitality from the rich lands lying beyond the borders of the Old Dominion. We could present no more striking evidence of its ruinous effects on land than those instanced by Mr Olmsted in his two dispassionately written works on the slave states. In the latest of these productions, *A Journey Through Texas*, he speaks of that frequent and melancholy spectacle in the older slave states—'an abandoned plantation of "worn-out" fields, with its little village of dwellings, now a home only for wolves and vultures. This but indicates a large class of observations, by which I hold myself justified in asserting that the natural elements of wealth in the soil of Texas will have been more exhausted in ten years, and with them the rewards offered by Providence to labour will have been more lessened than, without slavery, would have been the case in two hundred. Do not think that I use round numbers carelessly. After two hundred years' occupation of similar soils by a free-labouring community, I have seen no such evidences of waste, as in Texas, after ten years of slavery. And indications of the same kind I have observed, not isolated, but general, in every slave state but two—which I have seen only in parts yet scarcely at all settled. Moreover, I have seen similar phenomena following slavery in other countries and other climates.'

The effects of this wastefulness of land, are of national concern. Present existence is secured by drawing on future resources. To after generations, bread, meat, cotton, and other articles will all be enhanced in cost by the present system of territorial exhaustion. 'I consider,' adds this writer, 'that slavery is no less disastrous in its effects on industry—no less destructive to wealth. The laws and forces sustaining it, where it has been long established, may become a temporary necessity, as poisons are to the life of some unfortunate invalids. But laws intended to extend its field of improvidence are unjust, cruel, and oppressive.' If slavery be so ruinous, why should it be continued? It is tolerably evident that the buying of labourers, instead of hiring them, must be a most extravagant method of cultivating lands. Olmsted shews how capital is needlessly absorbed by investments in slaves, and that on this account alone the South deprives itself of vast means of improvement. But independently of the profits derived by Virginians in raising and selling slave-stock, there are powerful reasons why slavery is maintained and contended for.

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[*] *Whig Policy Analysed and Illustrated.* By Josiah Quincy. Boston. 1856.

The first of these reasons is the inordinate love of power. Reared in the uncontrolled exercise of authority, the slave-owner will submit to many inconveniences and even loss of profit, rather than tolerate what he considers the arrogance of an independent labourer. To ask a servant to do a thing instead of ordering him, is intolerable. The idea of hired labourers presuming to have rights, is repugnant to southern notions. Those who degrade themselves with labour, are bound to submit to any kind of treatment. The reckless homicide of a waiter at Washington by a member of congress from Alabama, in the spring of 1856, was, for example, justified by southern newspapers, on the ground that it was proper to teach free labourers their place. Another reason for sustaining slavery, is the status which is derived from the possession of negro property. The owning of even one slave raises a person in southern society, although the possessor of this miserable piece of property is under the necessity of hiring it out for his own subsistence. Addressing a southern man, Olmsted says: 'It is fashionable with you to own slaves, as it is with the English to own land, with the Arabs, horses; and as beads and vermilion have a value among the Indians which seems to us absurd, so, among you, has the power of commanding the service of slaves. Consequently, you are willing to pay a price for it which, to one not educated as you have been, seems absurdly high. Nor are you more likely to dispense with slaves when you have it in your power to possess them, than the Chinese with their fashion of the queue, Turks with their turban, or Englishmen with their hats.'

Wrong in principle, and in all respects ineconomical, as compared with free labour, slavery is on all hands acknowledged to exist only by fraud and violence, by disregard of the rights of citizens, by suppressing freedom of discussion and freedom of election, by preventing general education, by interrupting and annoying commerce, by exhausting lands, dishonouring industry, checking public improvements, degrading the national character, and, in short, by establishing an almost universal terrorism, unworthy of a free people. The dexterity with which these enormities has been sustained, is exceedingly marvellous. A few facts must be plainly stated. Practically a despotism, the great slaveholding interest, with far-sighted policy, professes those extreme principles of democracy which are upheld by the larger proportion of northern citizens—much as if the high conservative body in England were, for party purposes, to declare for extreme radicalism. Northern men, on the other hand, seek to conciliate the South, for the sake of selfish interests. The doctrine that high protective duties are an essential element of national prosperity, though long since exploded by political economists, is still current in the northern states of the Union. Doubtless, it is only through the efficacy of such protective duties as 30 per cent., that certain northern manufacturers can keep open their establishments; and we may assume that if these restrictions were removed, much misdirected capital would flow into more natural channels, and produce results more advantageous to all parties. Northern manufacturers, however, being the immediate gainers by so preposterous a system of protection, cling as closely to the privilege of taxing the community as ever did the landowners of Great Britain by their restrictions on the free import of food. Such prepossessions could meet with no response in the South, but for the necessity of buying party support. All the clothing, shoes, hats, and other articles required on southern plantations, are imported coastwise from northern manufacturers; so that, in reality, the South taxes itself in an enormous sum annually, in purchasing dear northern goods. 'Up to the present moment,' says an American writer, 'the North has been a commercial and equal partner with the South in all the material values or pecuniary results produced by slavery. In the first place, the great southern staples, cotton, tobacco, and rice, with their vast valuation, constituting virtually the commercial currency between America and Europe, have mostly passed through the hands of northern merchants and factors, enriching them with lucrative profits. Then slavery rendered the southern states dependent upon the North for all the manufactured articles they used; from parlour books to kitchen brooms; from beaver-hats for the master to the coarsest chip-hats for the slave; from penknives to ploughs. Nearly all the goods they used were either manufactured or imported for them by the North. Their teas, coffees, and other foreign productions either came to them through New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, or were brought to them direct from across the sea in northern ships. The factories and ships of the eastern states and the fertile prairie lands of the west, teemed with the industrial activities which these important staples employed and rewarded. What three millions of slaves grew under the lash in the South, made a continuous and profitable business for at least twice that number of freemen in the North. The latter, by that species of compromise for which it has been distinguished, grasped at the lion's share of the dividends of this commercial partnership. It coveted to sell to the southern states, far more than it purchased from them. If they would only consent to a high protective tariff, which would give their market for manufactures exclusively to the North, anti-slavery agitation in the free states should be put down and extinguished. The mobbing of "abolition agitators" in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and other northern cities, was a part of this business transaction—a small instalment of the purchase-price of *protection*.'* The case then stands thus: the South pretends to be democratic, to gain northern votes; and the North sells itself for southern money. Or, to come to the subject in hand—the South votes for Protection, and the North in return votes for Slavery.

Slavery, at least on its present footing, may therefore be said to exist, in some degree, on commercial protection. It is not to be supposed that the South is unanimous in submitting to this thraldom to northern interests. At the risk of breaking up the mutual understanding, southern orators and newspapers have strongly advocated free-trade with Europe, and numerous have been the projects to establish southern harbours, shipping, and commerce—all, of course, impracticable, on account of want of capital as well as want of business calculations and habits. Did the South really find it safe to break with the North, it would, perhaps, with its legislative influence find little difficulty in forcing free-trade measures; and from present appearances, acts of congress will take this direction.

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* *Plan of Brotherly Copartnership.* By Elihu Burritt.

It can admit of little doubt, that as protection is relaxed, so will a material cement between North and South be dissolved—an event so far favourable to the interests of freedom. But as long as the principles of democracy are in the ascendant, the anti-slavery party will not have great cause to rejoice. According to the confession of political faith, demonstrated in recent elections, democracy signifies the vindication of squatter sovereignty, the boundless extension of the Union, and, consequently, the illimitable addition of new slave states. Can such principles be carried out? Are they not of a character with all that has been tolerated since the acquisition of Louisiana? It is confidently expected that the rising and somewhat formidable opposition presented by the republican party, will interpose to prevent the further spread of slavery. But this, we fear, is only one of those idle expectations, with which the less sophisticated part of the nation has been long deceitfully amused. The South has many methods of disarming opposition. It can threaten dissolution of the Union, and that no one can endure; for devotion to the Union is a predominant sentiment with every American. By its vigorous action, the South can retain possession of power, and so effectually does it swamp the majority of free-state votes in congress by means at its disposal, that it laughs to scorn the efforts of disunionists and abolitionists.

Referring to the change of sentiment on the subject of slavery in the North, Mr Quincy, whom we have already quoted, shews how, step by step, the principles of freedom have sunk under party influences. Soon after the adoption of the constitution, he says, 'a change of feeling began to spread in the free states, in which, from envy, jealousy, rivalry, ambition, and other passions, parties arose, of which the slaveholders had the tact to avail themselves. . . . . It was the mutual interest which resulted from the alliance between slavery and democracy, that at first softened, and in time changed, in Massachusetts, the early, inherent detestation of negro slavery. This change did not extend beyond the democratic party. But after the lapse of twenty or thirty years, another element of slaveholders' influence was introduced. In the course of these years, the profits arising from the cultivation of cotton in the southern states, changed the opinion of the rich planters concerning the evil of slavery, which at first began there to be considered as a good, and then subsequently as a chief good. A like change, contemporaneously, came over the free states, in certain localities, where cotton-spinning and cotton-weaving began to be a source of wealth, and consequently of political power. This interest acquired strength with time and prosperity, and began to be a predominating influence, about the period the Whig party was formed, constituting in truth the chief part of its cement. It was formed out of the broken materials of the old parties, which time and circumstances had dissolved, and was composed of recently fledged politicians, with a mixture of some democrats and some federalists, who joined the new party, not because its principles were to their mind, but because it was the best in the field. It took the name of Whigs, not from any affinity with those of the Revolution, but because the name had a savour of liberty, and thus formed a convenient cover for those whose interests led to the support of slavery. Boston became one of the localities where the head-quarters of the Whigs was established, and of course became identified with the cotton-spinning and cotton-weaving interests. Here, therefore, the interests of the slaveholder were espoused with zeal, under the guise of upholding the constitution of the United States, of which the provision for returning runaway slaves began to appear a most important feature.'

And so, by general confession, the protracted and seemingly high-souled contest to check the progress of slavery, has been only a disguise under which to advance the interests of party. We are, in fact, to understand, that until the present time, the great thing held in view, is the power of returning members to congress to suit particular purposes, and that slavery has never clearly attained the position of a substantive question—scarcely been ever anything else than a convenient sham. On the seizure of Texas, and afterwards on the outbreak of the war with Mexico—whenever fresh territory for slavery purposes was to be added to the Union—the Whigs blazed forth 'Resolutions,' about 'the duty of the free states not to submit.' But with the firing off of these wind-guns, 'the clamour, the courage, and patriotism of the Whigs oozed away;' and on each occasion, when the special object for noisy demonstration was one way or other set at rest—as has been recently exhibited in the case of Kansas—down sunk all ebullition of public, or more properly, party sentiment. Are the modern republicans to be more sincere and trustworthy than the now 'fossilised' Whigs? We know not. Avowing a merely defensive policy, they have disclaimed any intention to interfere with southern institutions; and looking at the past, we may be pardoned for not entertaining high expectations of what is to ensue should they get into power—an event in itself doubtful. Meanwhile, strong language is occasionally used by 'free-soilers' in and out of congress, denunciatory of slaveholders, and we always seem to be on the eve of something being done to put an end to slavery. Alas! after talking and scheming for the last fifty years, slavery is more vigorous and lifelike than ever. According to the well-known ratio of increase—about 150,000 per annum—the present number of slaves in the United States cannot be fewer than 4,100,000, shewing an addition of 900,000 since 1850. We think it may be safely averred that party manœuvring has had a fair trial and been found wanting. Slavery is to be abated neither by abuse, nor by selfish political partisanship. The free states, if they feel inclined, may appoint representatives in congress who could shiver the principle of squatter sovereignty to atoms, and so reduce slavery to a local institution, preliminary to its extinction. How, in the aggregate, they have failed to do so, let late elections testify.

W. C.

CANONBURY TOWER.

Everybody who has, upon either business or pleasure, wandered to the northward of London, will probably have seen the queer old square brick building which bears the name heading this article. A noticeable old place it is, with its little latticed windows, each one on a different level; its formal row of iron railings round the roof, and its melancholy weather-cock crowning the summit; and it appears all the more curious contrasted with the pretty modern villas which now hem it in on every side. All its ancient friends have one by one departed; and there is not remaining near it one of the many structures which surrounded it upon its erection in the reign of 'Bluff King Hall.' The tower of Islington old church—not much unlike itself in shape and general appearance—for many a long year kept it company in overlooking the country around, and made so sturdy a resistance when its demolition was attempted, that gunpowder had to be employed by the Goths who levelled it; but now that is gone, and the old tower is left alone in its glory.

Many mutations had the noble Canonbury House, of which this is the only remaining portion, undergone ere it was destroyed to make way for the more modern buildings, which have, with mushroom-like rapidity, sprung up upon its site. Up to 1539, it was a goodly edifice, belonging to the priory of St Bartholomew, established as early as the middle of the thirteenth century in West Smithfield—a sort of country-house, in which the prior himself, together with some of the more favoured of the monks, passed the pleasant part of the year, leaving it when winter set in for their more cozy habitation in Smithfield. Very holy men, and very highly esteemed, were these same friars of St Bartholomew, and vastly were their prayers sought for by the laity around; hence the priory of Canonbury became richly endowed with divers gifts of lands and fair dwellings—not the most inconsiderable of which was a noble bequest made in 1334 by Henry le Hayward and Roger de Creton of 110 acres of arable-land in 'Isldon and Kentyshton' (Islington and Kentishtown) for prayers and masses to be said for the repose of the soul of their kinsman John de Kentyshton. And so the old monastery went on for many years, increasing in wealth and extent, until one fine autumn morning in 1539, down came the royal mandate for the suppression of the 'religious house;' and amid wo and lamentation, inventories were taken of jewels and rich stuffs—altars were despoiled of their trappings, shrines of their adornments, and all the long-hoarded riches of Canonbury Priory were handed over to the king. The unfortunate monks, turned adrift upon the world, were pensioned off: the sub-prior had L.15 a year awarded him, and of the rest, some had L.6, 18s. 4d., and some L.5 apiece.

Henry did not long keep the desecrated priory in his own hands, but gave it next year, together with the lands belonging to it, to the keeper of his privy seal, Thomas Lord Cromwell, upon whose decapitation, in August of the same year, this portion, together with all the rest of his property, reverted to the crown.

The house and manor remained for many years the property of the sovereign, who put a keeper in it, with directions to 'keep it sweet and clean, and entirely meet for the king's use when he chose to come thereto;' and who paid yearly L.20 to the Lady Anne of Cleves for permission to live on the manor.

This state of affairs continued with little alteration until the reign of Edward VI., who made over the whole of the property to John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland; and, as if some fatality was connected with the place, its noble owner was attainted of treason, and beheaded a few months afterwards.

Falling again into royal hands, the old dwelling was presented to Thomas Lord Wentworth, who, in 1570, alienated it to a certain John Spencer, whose daughter, marrying with the second Lord Compton—as we shall presently more fully notice—brought the estate into the possession of the family of its present noble owner, the Marquis of Northampton.

Master John Spencer, nicknamed 'rich Spencer,' or, as he subsequently became, Sir John Spencer, albeit not of gentle blood, for he was a citizen and clothworker of London, was yet esteemed the richest man of his time in Queen Elizabeth's dominions. Having been respectively alderman and sheriff, he became, in 1594, lord mayor of London, and earned great glory by his prudent conduct during a fearful famine which occurred in his mayoralty. He did not often live at Canonbury in the busy days of his life, for it was then esteemed a long way from the metropolis; the roads were bad, and infested with robbers; and, besides, Sir John had a noble mansion in the city, no other than Crosby Hall, in Bishopsgate Street. When, however, old age prevented him from taking any part in the active duties of a citizen, the old knight retired to Canonbury, and lived in great dignity and splendour there, and once had the honour of entertaining his royal mistress, who, one summer afternoon in 1581, rode northward to take the air, and stopped and 'ate fruits and drank ale at the fair manor of Canonbury.'

The fame of the knight's great wealth was not confined to England, but reached the continent, and excited the cupidity of certain Dunkirk pirates, who framed the bold attempt of coming over to England and carrying away the rich man by night to France, in order to obtain a large ransom for his restoration. The shallop in which these worthies sailed came as far as Barking Creek, where six of the pirates left her, and came to Islington; but fortunately for himself, Sir John was not at his house at Canonbury, having been summoned the same day to St James's, and so the robbers were forced to return empty-handed.

A splendid funeral procession was that which issued from the old tower when the doughty knight was gathered to his fathers; and bitter was the mourning, especially among the poorer portion of the inhabitants round about, for Sir John was a very father to those who solicited his charity. More than 1000 poor people followed the body to the grave, and 320 of them, by the express direction of the deceased knight, received what was in those days conceived to be a handsome remembrance. What this remembrance was, it may perhaps interest the reader to know; and so here follows the quaint old account of the matter: 'There was made choice of 320 men and women, poor and old, the which were every of them neighbours living about; and to them severally was given a basket, in the which basket there was contained divers good commodities—that is to say, a black gown, four pounds of beef, two loaves of bread, a little flask of wine, a candlestick, a pound of candles, two saucers, two spoons, a black pudding, a pair of gloves, a dozen of points, two red herrings, four white herrings, six sprats, and two eggs, the which gave every of them who did receive the same, great contentment.'

We cannot at the present day very well estimate the exact amount of Sir John Spencer's wealth; but besides landed and personal property to a very large extent, his executors found among his papers bonds to the amount of L.133,000.

From the rich knight, Canonbury House passed into the possession of a lady—Elizabeth Spencer, Sir John's only daughter and sole heiress. Of course the lady, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, her wealth, was very much courted; and we have accounts of more than one fatal duel being fought in and about Islington respecting her future destiny. Being under age, she was in the protection of the Court of Chancery, and placed by the then chancellor under the care of one or two strict old duennas in Canonbury House. Among her numerous admirers, however, she numbered one—William, second Lord Compton, who turning over in his mind divers salutary maxims, among which 'None but the brave deserve the fair,' and 'Faint heart never won fair lady,' were doubtless prominent; and being nothing daunted by the seeming impregnability of the castle in which the rich beauty was confined, or by the grim custodians who had the charge of her, determined to carry the lady off and make her his wife. That he succeeded in so doing is undisputed; but as to the *modus operandi*, historians are not very well agreed. The common, and certainly the most romantic version of the story is, that the lady was conveyed away one dark blustering December night *in a baker's basket*.

Her admirer, whom she married in 1594, was Lord President of Wales, and had necessarily to spend a great part of the year in that dominion; his lady appears to have disliked Wales, and very shortly after her marriage expressed her determination to live in Canonbury House. This being agreed to by her husband, she set to work to make arrangements for establishing as noble a household in the old building as any gay lady could possibly desire. The extent of the arrangements she contemplated may best be gathered from a letter written to her husband not very long after her marriage. After commencing with 'My sweet life,' followed up with a little 'soft sawder,' the lady makes the following modest proposals respecting herself and her household:

'I pray and beseech you to grant to me, your most kind and loving wife, the sum of L.2600 quarterly to be paid. Also, I would, besides that allowance, have L.600 quarterly to be paid, for the performance of charitable works; and those things I would not, neither will be accountable for. Also, I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I, none borrow but you. Also, I would have two gentlewomen, lest one should be sick, or have some other let; also, believe it, it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their lord and lady with a great estate. Also, when I ride a-hunting or a-hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending; so, for either of these said women, I must and will have for either of them a horse. Also, I will have six or eight gentlemen; and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet to myself, with four very fair horses; and a coach for my women, lined with cloth, and laced with gold, otherwise with scarlet, and laced with silver, and four good horses; also, I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women. Also, at any time when I travel, I will be allowed not only caroches and spare horses for me and my women, but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all—orderly, not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs with either chamber-maids', nor theirs with wash-maids'. Also, for laundresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before with the carriages to see all safe; and the chamber-maids I will have go before, that the chamber may be ready, sweet, and clean. Also, for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman-usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse, to attend me either in city or country; and I must have two footmen; and my desire is that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself, besides my yearly allowance, I would have twenty gowns of apparel, six of them excellent good ones; eight of them for the country, and six other of them very excellent good ones. Also, I would have to put in my purse L.2000 and L.200, and so you to pay my debts; also, I would have L.6000 to buy me jewels, and L.4000 to buy me a pearl-chain..... Also, I will have all my houses furnished, and my lodging-chambers to be suited with .... silver warming-pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like.'

We have no doubt the poor husband agreed to all this; and indeed he was not in a condition to dissent from any of his wife's proceedings, for his success in the acquisition of herself and her enormous wealth drove his lordship out of his wits, and he remained in a distracted state for several years.

And so the rich wife lived like a queen year after year in the grand old house, sought after by the great and noble for miles around. There were fair gardens then round the dwelling, and pleasant fields beyond; and in the warm summer days, many a stately dame in rustling silk, and courtly cavalier in richly embroidered doublet, sauntered about the dwelling, having resorted thither from the noise and ceremony of St James's. And then when winter set in, the 'velvet-lined' carriage, with its four fair horses, stood at the door; and with her long array of gentlemen, waiting-women, and maidens, the noble dame took her departure for her warm house in London, there to spend the winter.

For some reason, not very easy now to determine, the noble owners of the mansion appear gradually to have taken a dislike to their ancestral residence, and long before the reign of 'good Queen Anne,' the old tower, with the house by its side, had degenerated from a nobleman's residence into a mere lodging-house. A staircase, common to all the inmates, ran from the bottom of the edifice to the top, communicating with each floor, and the names of the lodgers were written upon small plates of tin affixed to the doors of their respective apartments, much in the same fashion as they are at the present day affixed at colleges and inns of court. The lodgers in the house and tower were mostly literary men, who visited the pleasant village to enjoy, at little expense and near to the metropolis, the relaxation and delights of the country. Here Ephraim Chambers spent many a weary hour over the compilation of the ponderous folio dictionary which bears his name—the parent of the numerous Encyclopædia family, previously unknown. From hence Newbury launched forth those dearly loved little books which laid *Jack the Giant-killer* on the shelf, rooted up his bean-stalk, and made Cinderella tremble in her brittle slipper, and which were the treasures of the children of England for more than half a century. And last, but not least in our list, the weak-minded, amiable, lovable 'Goldy,' more than once made this tower his residence, and in it were brought to light some of those 'sweet children of his brain,' which will live as long as the English language itself has an existence.

Nor were more fashionable visitors to the tower wanting, for some enterprising person had discovered mineral water in the neighbourhood, good for half 'the ills which flesh is heir to;' and invalids of all descriptions, especially fair ones afflicted with that vague incomprehensible complaint, 'the vapours,' delighted in making this their summer resort, tripping down to the spring every morning in negligent attire, to take their accustomed quantum, and, doubtless, interfering sadly with the quiet labours of their literary neighbours.

Years rolled away, and as the lodgers at Canonbury saw the great city coming to visit them in their silent retreat, the fields around cut up for brick earth, and rows of goodly houses rising on every side, they found that they had lost all prospect of a continuance of the country quiet, which had been for so long a time the characteristic of their pleasant abode, and so they one by one left the old tower never to return; and before 1800, all the fame of Canonbury Tower as a pleasant lodging-house, had departed.

The old tower is nearly deserted now, and the building at its base has long since been converted into a dwelling-house. Hard by is established a goodly sized Ladies' Seminary; and part of the pleasant gardens of Canonbury House, where cowled monks walked with solemn pace for many a long year, and where high-born dames listened to tender tales from the eloquent lips of sighing cavaliers, is now a gravelled playground, where groups of pretty school-girls con their Magnall's Questions and Italian Grammars, all forgetful of the strange events that, in years gone by, took place in the neighbourhood around them.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—SCALING THE CLIFF.

O for a long interval of darkness!

Our hearts beat anxiously—at least I can answer for my own. Rube watched the guerrilleros, permitting his head to be seen by them. My eyes were bent upon the rocky wall, but through the thick darkness I looked in vain for our comrade. I listened to hear how he was progressing: I could distinguish a slight scratching against the cliff, each moment higher and farther away; but Garey climbed with a moccasined foot, and the noise was too faint to reach the ears of our enemies. O for a long interval of darkness!

It appeared a long one; perhaps it was not five minutes, but it *felt* twice that, before the lightning again blazed forth. With the flash, I ran my eyes up the precipitous wall. O God! Garey was still upon its face, scarcely midway up. He was standing on a ledge—his body flattened against the rock—and with his arms extended horizontally, he presented the appearance of a man crucified upon the cliff! So long as the glare lasted, he remained in this attitude, motionless as the rock itself.

I turned with anxious look towards the guerrilleros. I heard no voice; I observed no movement. Thank Heaven! they saw him not!

Near where he was resting, some bushes of the trailing cedar grew out of the cliff; their dark foliage mottled its white face, rendering the form of the climber less conspicuous.

Another long spell of darkness, another blaze of light.

I scanned the gorge: no human form was visible. I saw a dark line that, like a crack, vertically intersected the cliff from parapet to base: it was the rope Garey had carried up. He had reached the summit in safety!

It was my turn next—for Rube insisted on retaining the post of danger—and with my rifle slung on my back, I stood ready. I had given the parting whisper to my brave steed, and pressed his velvet muzzle to my cheek. With the last flicker of the electric gleam, I seized the hanging lazo, and drew myself upward.

I had confidence in the rope: I knew it was fastened above, or safe in the strong grasp of Garey. With its aid, the ascent was rendered easy. I experienced no difficulty in climbing from ledge to ledge, and before the light came again, I had reached the crest of the cliff.

We lay flat among the bushes that grew by the very brink, scarcely shewing our faces to the front.

I saw that the rope had been fastened round the trunk of a small tree. Presently we perceived by its jerking that Rube had begun his ascent. Shortly after, we could hear him sprawling and scratching upward, and then his thin dark form loomed over the edge of the cliff, and dead beat for breath, he staggered silently into the bushes beside us. Even in the darkness, I noticed something peculiar in his appearance: his head looked smaller, but I had no time to question him.

We waited only for another glance at the guerrilleros; they were still at their posts, evidently unconscious of our movements. Rube's catskin cap, cunningly adjusted upon the boulder, satisfied them that we were still at ours; and explained, moreover, the oddness I had observed about the upper story of the trapper.

Rube had now recovered wind; and gathering up the rope, we stole away over the table-summit to search for a place of descent.

On reaching the opposite side, we at once found what we wanted—a tree near the edge of the cliff. Many small pines grew upon the escarpment; and selecting one, we knotted the rope securely around its trunk.

There was yet much to be done before any of us could attempt the descent. We knew that the cliff was more than a hundred feet in vertical height, and to glide down a rope of that length is a trying feat, worthy the most expert of tars. None of us might be able to accomplish it: the first could be lowered down easily enough, and this was our intention; so might the second; but the other would have to glide down the rope.

We were not long delayed by the contemplation of this obstacle: my comrades were men of quick thought; and a plan to lessen the difficulty soon suggested itself. Their knives were out in a trice: a sapling was procured, and cut into short pieces; these were notched, and tied at intervals along the rope. Our 'Jacob's ladder' was ready.

It still remained to make sure that the rope was of sufficient length. The knots had somewhat shortened it; but this point was soon settled with like ingenuity. A small stone was tied to one end, and then dropped over the cliff. We listened: we heard the dull 'thump' of the stone upon the prairie turf. The rope therefore reached to the ground.

It was again drawn up, the stone taken out, and the noose fastened around the body of Rube, under his armpits. He was the lightest, and for this reason had been chosen to make the first descent, as he would least try the strength of the rope—still a doubtful point. The ascent had not proved it—for in climbing up, but one-half of our weight had been upon it, our feet resting either against the cliff, or upon its ledges. On reaching the plain, Rube was to submit the rope to trial, before either Garey or I should attempt to go down. This he was to do by adding a large stone to his own weight—making both at least equal to that of Garey, who was by far the heaviest of the party.

All being arranged, the old trapper slid silently over the edge of the cliff—Garey and I giving out the rope slowly, and with caution. Foot by foot, and yard by yard, it was drawn through our hands by the weight of the descending body, now lost to our sight over the brow of the cliff.

Still slowly, and with caution, we allowed the lazo to pass, taking care that it should glide gradually, so as not to jerk, and cause the body of our comrade to vibrate with too much violence against the rocks.

We were both seated close together, our faces turned to the plain. More than three-quarters of the rope had passed from us, and we were congratulating ourselves that the trial would soon be over, when, to our dismay, the strain ceased with a suddenness that caused both of us to recoil upon our backs! At the same instant, we heard the 'twang' of the snapping rope, followed by a sharp cry from below!

We sprang to our feet, and mechanically recommenced hauling upon the rope. The weight was no longer upon it; it was light as packthread, and returned to our hands without effort.

Desisting, we fronted to each other, but not for an explanation. Neither required it; neither uttered a word. The case was clear: the rope had broken; our comrade had been hurled to the earth!

With a simultaneous impulse, we dropped upon our knees; and, crawling forward to the brink of the precipice, looked over and downward. We could see nothing in the dark abysm that frowned below; and we waited till the light should break forth again.

We listened with ears keenly set. Was it a groan we heard? a cry of agony? No; its repetition told us what it was—the howl of the prairie-wolf. No human voice reached our ears. Alas, no! Even a cry of pain would have been welcome, since it would have told us our comrade still lived. But no, he was silent—dead—perhaps broken to atoms!

It was long ere the lightning gleamed again. Before it did, we heard voices. They came from the bottom of the cliff directly under us; but there were two, and neither was the voice of the trapper. It is easy to distinguish the full intonation of the Saxon from the shrill treble of the sons of Anahuac. The voices were those of our foes.

Presently the light discovered them to us. Two there were. They were on horseback, moving on the plain below, and close in to the cliff. We saw them distinctly, but we saw not what we had expected—the mangled body of our comrade! The gleam, long continued, had given us full time to scrutinise the ground. We could have distinguished upon it any object as large as a cat. Rube, living or dead, was certainly not there!

Had he fallen into the hands of the guerrilla? The two we saw carried lances, but no prisoner. It was not likely they had captured him; besides, we knew that Rube, unless badly crippled, would never have surrendered without a struggle, and neither shot nor shout had been heard.

We were soon relieved from all uneasiness on this score. The brigands continued their conversation, and the light breeze wafted their voices upwards, so that we could distinguish part of what was said.

'Carrambo!' exclaimed one impatiently; 'you must have been mistaken? It was the coyoté you heard.'

'Capitan! I am confident it was a man's voice.'

'Then it must have proceeded from one of the *picaros* behind the rock. There is no one out here? But come! let us return by the other side of the mesa —*vamos!*'

The hoof-strokes admonished us that they were passing onward to carry out the design of the last speaker, who was no other than Ijurra himself.

It was a relief to know that our comrade had not yet fallen into their clutches. How far he was injured, we could not have an idea. The rope had given way close to the top, and Rube had carried most of it down with him. In the confusion, we had not noticed how much remained, *behind* our hands, when he fell; and now we could only guess. Seeing that he had disappeared from the spot, we were in high hope that he had sustained no serious injury.

But whither had he gone? Had he but *crawled* away, and was yet in the neighbourhood of the mesa? If so, they might light upon him. Hiding-place there was none, either by the base of the cliff or on the surrounding plain.

Garey and I were anxious about the result—the more so, that the guerrilleros had heard his cry, and were in search of him. He might easily be found in such a naked spot.

We hastily formed the determination to cross the table summit to the other side, and watch the movements of the two horsemen.

Guided by their voices, we once more knelt above them, at the rearmost angle of the mound. They had there halted to examine the ground, and only waited for the flash; we, too, waited above them, and *within range.*

'We kin fetch them out o' thar saddles?' whispered my companion.

I hesitated to give my assent; perhaps it was prudence that restrained me, for I had now conceived hopes of a surer deliverance.

At that moment gleamed the lightning; the dark horsemen loomed large under its yellow glare; they were less than fifty paces from the muzzles of our guns: we could have sighted them with sure aim; and, bayed as we had been, I was almost tempted to yield to the solicitations of my companion.

Just then, an object came under our eyes that caused both of us to draw back our half-levelled rifles—that object was the body of our comrade Rube. It was lying flat along the ground, the arms and legs stretched out to their full extent, and the face buried deep in the grass. From the elevation at which we viewed it, it appeared like the hide of a young buffalo spread out to dry, and pinned tightly to the turf. But we knew it was not that; we knew it was the body of a man dressed in brown buckskin—the body of the earless trapper! It was not dead neither; no dead body could have placed itself in such an attitude, for it lay flattened along the turf like a gigantic newt.

The object of this attitude was evident to us, and our hearts beat with a painful anxiety while the light flickered around. The body was scarcely five hundred yards out; but though perfectly visible from our position, it must have been inconspicuous to the horsemen below; for as soon as it darkened, we heard them, to our great relief, ride back toward the front, Ijurra reiterating his doubts as they passed away. Fortunate it was for both him and his companion they had not espied that prostrate form—fortunate for Rube —for all of us!

Garey and I kept our places, and waited for another flash. When it came, the brown buckskin was no longer in sight! Far off—nearly a mile off, we fancied we could distinguish the same form flattened out as before; but the gloam of the prairie-grass rendered our vision uncertain.

Of one thing, however, we were certain—our comrade had escaped.

CHAPTER XL.

A REINFORCEMENT.

For the first time, since encountering the guerrilla, I breathed freely, and felt confident we should get free. My comrade shared my belief; and it is needless to say that we recrossed the summit of the mesa with lighter hearts and step more buoyant.

Of course we no longer speculated about making the descent; with the fragment of rope left, that was impossible. We were simply returning to the front, to keep an eye upon the guerrilleros, and, if possible, prevent them from approaching our horses—should they by any chance discover that we had retreated from our position behind the rock.

We were the more anxious about our horses, now that we had less apprehension for ourselves; at least I can answer for myself, and the explanation is easy. So long as I felt the probability that every moment might be the last of my life, the fate of Moro and the white steed was but a secondary consideration. Now that I felt certain I should survive this perilous escapade, the future once more urged its claims; and I was anxious not only to preserve my own steed, but the beautiful creature that had led me into all this peril, but whose capture still promised its rich reward.

That all danger was past—that in a few hours we should be free, was the full belief both of my companion and myself. Perhaps you may not comprehend from what *data* we drew so confident and comfortable a conclusion, though our reasoning was simple enough. We knew that Rube would reach the rancheria, and return with a rescue—that was all.

'Tis true we were not without *some* anxiety. The rangers might no longer be there?—the army might have marched?—perhaps the picket was withdrawn? Rube himself might be intercepted, or slain?

The last hypothesis gave us least concern. We had full trust in the trapper's ability to penetrate to the American camp—to the enemy's, if necessary. We had just been favoured with a specimen of his skill. Whether the army had advanced or not, Rube would reach it before morning, if he should have to steal a horse upon the way. He would soon find the rangers; and, even without orders, Holingsworth would *lend* him a few—half-a-dozen of them would be enough. In the worst view of the case, there were stragglers enough about the camp—odd birds, that could easily be enlisted for such a duty. We had scarcely a doubt that our comrade would come back with a rescue.

As to the time, we were left to conjectures. It might be before morning's light—it might not be before late in the following day, or even the night after. But that was a consideration that now weighed lightly. We could hold our aërial fortress for a week —a month—ay, far longer, and against hundreds. We could not be assailed. With our rifles to guard the cliff, no storming-party could approach—no forlorn-hope could scale our battlements!

But what of thirst and hunger, you will ask? Ha! we dreaded not either. Fortune's favours had fallen upon us in showers. Even on that lone summit, we found the means to assuage the one and satisfy the other!

In crossing the table-top, we stumbled upon huge *echinocacti*, that grew over the ground like ant-hills or gigantic bee-hives. They were the *mammillaria* of Quackenboss—dome-shaped, and some of them ten feet in diameter. Garey's knife was out in a trice; a portion of the spinous coat of the largest was stripped off, its top truncated, and a bowl scooped in the soft succulent mass. In another minute, we had assuaged our thirst from this vegetable fountain of the Desert.

With similar facility were we enabled to gratify the kindred appetite. As I had conjectured, on viewing them from the plain, the trees of light-green foliage were 'piñons'—the 'nut-pine' (*Pinus edulis*), of which there are several species in Northern Mexico, whose cones contain seeds edible and nutritious. A few handfuls of these we gathered, and hungered no more. They would have been better roasted, but at that moment we were contented to eat them raw.

No wonder, then, that with such a supply for the present, and such hopes for the future, we no longer dreaded the impotent fury of our foes.

We lay down at the top of the gorge to watch their further movements, and cover our horses from their attack. The flash of the lightning shewed them still on guard, just as we had left them. One of each file was mounted, while his companion, on foot, paced to and fro in the intervals of the cordon. Their measures were cunningly taken; they were evidently determined we should not steal past them in the darkness!

The lightning began to abate, and the intervals between the flashes became longer and longer.

During one of these intervals, we were startled by the sound of hoof-strokes at some distance off: it was the tramp of horses upon the hard plain. There is a difference between the hoof-stroke of a ridden horse and one that is riderless, and the prairie-man is rarely puzzled to distinguish them. My companion at once pronounced the horses to be 'mounted.'

The guerrilleros, on the alert, had heard them at the same time as we, and two of them now galloped out to reconnoitre. This we ascertained only by *hearing*, for we could not distinguish an object six feet from our faces—the darkness was almost palpable to the touch.

The sounds came from a considerable distance, but we could tell that the horsemen were advancing toward the mesa.

We drew no hope from this advent. Rube could not yet have even reached the rancheria. The new-comers were El Zorro and his companion on their return.

We were not kept long in doubt: the horsemen approached, and shouts and salutations were exchanged between them and the guerrilleros, while the horses of both parties neighed in response, as if they knew each other.

At this moment the lightning shone again, and to our surprise we perceived not only El Zorro, but a reinforcement of full thirty men! The trampling of many hoofs had half prepared us for this discovery.

It was not without feelings of alarm that we beheld this accession to the enemy's strength. Surely they would no longer hesitate to assail our fortress behind the rock? At least our horses would be captured? Besides, Rube's rescue might be too weak for such a force? There were nearly fifty.

Our anxiety as to the first two points was soon at an end. To our astonishment, we perceived that no assault was to be made as yet. We saw them increase the strength of their cordon of sentries, and make other dispositions to carry on the siege. Evidently they regarded us as hunters do the grizzly bear, the lion, or tiger—not to be attacked in our lair. They dreaded the havoc which they well knew would be made by our rifles and revolvers; and they determined to reduce us by starvation. On no other principle could we account for the cowardly continence of their revenge.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE INDIAN SPY.

It was past the hour of midnight. The lightning, that for some time had appeared only at long intervals, now ceased altogether. Its fitful glare gave place to a softer, steadier light, for the moon had arisen, and was climbing up the eastern sky. Cumulus clouds still hung in the heavens, slowly floating across the canopy; but their masses were detached, and the azure firmament was visible through the spaces between. The beautiful planet Venus, and here and there a solitary star, twinkled in these blue voids, or gleamed through the filmy bordering of the clouds; but the chiefs of the constellations alone were visible. The moon's disc was clear and well defined, whiter from contrast with the dark cumuli; and her beam frosted the prairie till the grass looked hoar. There was neither mist nor mirage; the electric fluid had purged the atmosphere of its gases, and the air was cool, limpid, and bracing. Though the moon had passed the full, so brilliant was her beam, that an object could have been distinguished far off upon the plain, whose silvery level extended on all sides to the horizon. The thick black clouds, however, moving silently over the sky, occasioned long intervals of eclipse, during which the prairie, as before, was shrouded in sombre darkness.

Up to this time, Garey and I had remained by the head of the little gorge, through which we had ascended. The moon was behind us, for the guerrilla was on the western side of the mesa. The shadow of the mound was thrown far out upon the plain, and just beyond its well-defined edge was the line of sentinels, thickly posted. On our knees among the low shrubbery, we were unseen by them, while we commanded a perfect view of the whole troop, as they smoked, chattered, shouted, and sang—for they gave such tokens of their jovial humour.

After quietly watching them for some time, Garey left me to take a turn round the summit, and reconnoitre the opposite or eastern side. In that direction lay the rancheria; and if the picket was still stationed there, we might soon expect the rescue. My rangers were not the men to tarry, called forth on such a purpose; and, under Rube's guidance, they would be most likely to make their approach by the rear of the mound. Garey, therefore, went in that direction to make his reconnaissance.

He had not parted from me more than a minute, when a dark object out upon the plain attracted my glance. I fancied it was the figure of a man; it was prostrate and flattened against the ground, just as Old Rube had appeared when making his escape! Surely it was not he? I had but an indistinct view of it, for it was full six hundred yards from the mesa, and directly beyond the line of the guerrilleros. Just then a cloud crossing the moon's disc, shrouded the plain, and the dark object was no more visible.

I kept my eyes fixed on the spot, and waited for the returning light. When the cloud passed, the figure was no longer where I had first noticed it; but nearer to the horsemen I perceived the same object, and in the same attitude as before! It was now within less than two hundred yards of the Mexican line, but a bunch of tufted grass appeared to shelter it from the eyes of the guerrilleros, as none of them gave any sign that it was perceived by them. From my elevated position, the grass did not conceal it. I had a clear view of the figure, and was certain it was the body of a man, and, still more, of a *naked* man, for it glistened under the sheen of the moonlight, as only a naked body would have done.

Up to this time I had fancied, or rather *feared*, it might be Rube. I say feared—for I had no wish to see Rube, upon his return, present himself in that fashion. Surely he would not come back alone? And why should he be thus playing the spy, since he already knew the exact position of our enemy?

The apparition puzzled me, and I was for a while in doubt. But the *naked* body reassured me. It could not be Rube. The skin was of a dark hue, but so was that of the old trapper. Though born white, the sun, dirt, gunpowder, and grease, with the smoke of many a prairie-fire, had altered Rube's complexion to the true copper-tint; and in point of colour, he had but little advantage over a full-blood Indian. But Rube would not have been naked; he never doffed his buckskins. Besides, the oily glitter of that body was not Rube's; his 'hide' would not have shone so under the moonlight. No; the prostrate form was not his.

Another cloud cast new shadows; and while these continued, I saw no more of the skulking figure. As the moon again shone forth, I perceived that it was gone from behind the tuft of grass. I scanned the ground in the immediate neighbourhood. It was not to be seen; but on looking further out, I could just distinguish the figure of a man, bent forward and rapidly gliding away. I followed it with my eyes until it disappeared in the distance, as though it had melted into the moonlight.

While gazing over the distant plain in the direction whence the figure had retreated, I was startled at beholding, not one, but many forms dimly outlined upon the prairie edge.

'It *was* Rube,' thought I; 'and yonder are the rangers!'

I strained my eyes to their utmost. They were horsemen beyond a doubt; but, to my astonishment, instead of being close together, one followed another in single file, until a long line was traced against the sky like the links of a gigantic chain. Except in the narrow defile, or the forest-path, my rangers never rode in that fashion. It could not be they?

At this crisis, a new thought came into my mind. More than once in my life had I witnessed a spectacle similar to that now under my eyes—more than once had I looked upon it with dread. That serried line was an old acquaintance: it was a band of Indian warriors on their midnight march—upon the war-trail!

The actions of the spy were explained: he was an Indian runner. The party to whom he belonged was about to approach the mesa—perhaps with the design of encamping there—he had been sent forward to reconnoitre the ground.

What effect his tale would have, I could not guess. I could see that the horsemen were halted—perhaps awaiting the return of their messenger. They were too distant to be seen by the Mexicans; and the minute after, they were also invisible to my eyes upon the darkly shadowed prairie.

Before communicating with Garey, I resolved to wait for another gleam of moonlight, so that I might have a more distinct story to tell.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE CABALLADA.

It was nearly a quarter of an hour before the cloud moved away; and then, to my surprise, I saw a clump of horses—not *horsemen*—upon the prairie, and scarcely half a mile distant from the mesa! Not one of them was mounted, and, to all appearance, it was a drove of wild-horses that had galloped up during the interval of darkness, and were now standing silent and motionless.

I strained my eyes upon the distant prairie, but the dim horsemen were no longer to be seen. They must have ridden off beyond the range of vision?

I was about to seek my comrade and communicate to him what had passed, when, on rising to my feet, I found him standing by my side. He had been all around the summit without seeing aught, and had returned to satisfy himself that the guerrilla was still quiet.

'Hillow!' he exclaimed, as his eyes fell upon the *caballada*. 'What the darnation's yonder? A drove o' wild hosses? It's mighty strange them niggers don't notice 'em! By the etarnal'——

I know not what Garey meant to have said. His words were drowned by the wild yell that broke simultaneously from the Mexican line; and the next moment the whole troop were seen springing to their saddles, and putting themselves in motion.

We of course supposed that they had just discovered the caballada of wild-horses, and it was that that was producing this sudden stampede. What was our astonishment on perceiving that we ourselves were the cause of the alarm; for the guerrilleros instead of fronting to the plain, rode closer up to the cliff, and screaming wildly, fired their carbines at *us!* Among the rest, we could distinguish the great gun of El Zorro, and the hiss of its leaden bullet, as it passed close to our ears!

We were puzzled at first to know how they had discovered us. A glance explained that the moon had risen higher in the heavens, and the shadow cast by the mound had been gradually foreshortened. While gazing out at the caballada, we had incautiously kept our feet, and our figures, magnified to gigantic proportions, were thrown forward upon the plain directly under the eyes of our enemies. They had but to look up to see us where we stood.

Instantly we knelt down among the bushes, clutching our rifles. The surprise occasioned by our appearance upon the cliff seemed to have deprived our enemies, for the moment, of their habitual prudence, as several of them rode boldly within range. Perhaps they were some of the late arrivals. In the dark shadow, we could not make out their forms; but one had the misfortune to be mounted on a white horse, and that guided the trapper's aim. I saw him glancing along his barrel, and heard the sharp crack. I fancied I heard a stifled groan from below, and the next moment the white horse was seen galloping out into the moonlight, but the rider was no longer upon his back.

Another cloud passed over the moon, and the plain was again shrouded from our sight. Garey was proceeding to reload, when a cry arose amidst the darkness, that caused him to pause and listen. The cry was again repeated, and then uttered continuously with that wild intonation which can alone proceed from the throat of the savage. It was not the guerrilla that was uttering that cry; it was the yell of the Indian warrior.

'Comanche war-hoop!' cried Garey, after listening a moment. 'Comanche war-hoop! by the etarnal! Hooraw! the Injuns are upon 'em!'

Amidst the cries, we could hear the rapid trampling of horses, and the ground appeared to vibrate under the quick heavy tread. Each moment the strokes sounded nearer. The savages were charging the guerrilla!

The moon shot forth from the cloud. There was no longer a doubt. The wild-horses were mounted; each carried an Indian naked to the waist, his painted body glaring red in the moonlight, and terrible to behold.

By this time the Mexicans had all mounted and faced towards the unexpected foe, but with evident signs of irresolution in their ranks. They would never stand the charge—no, never. So said Garey; and he was right.

The savages had advanced within less than a hundred paces of the Mexican line, when they were observed to pull suddenly up. It was but a momentary halt—just time enough to enable them to mark the formation of their foes, and send a flight of arrows into their midst. That done, they dashed onward, uttering their wild yells, and brandishing their long spears.

The guerrilleros only waited to discharge their carbines and escopettes; they did not think of reloading. Most of them flung away their guns as soon as they had fired, and the retreat began. The whole troop turned its back upon the enemy, and spurring their horses to a gallop, came sweeping round the base of the mesa in headlong flight.

The Indians, uttering their demoniac yells, followed as fast. They were rendered more furious, that their hated foe was likely to escape them. The latter were indebted to us for having put them upon the alert. But for that circumstance, the Indians would have charged them while dismounted, and far different might have been their fate. Mounted and ready for flight, most of them would probably get clear.

The moment we saw the direction the chase was about to take, Garey and I rushed across the summit to that side. From the brow of the precipice, our view was perfect, and we could see both parties as they passed along its base directly below us. Both were riding in straggling clumps, and scarcely two hundred paces separated the rearmost of the pursued from the headmost of the pursuers. The latter still uttered their war-cry, while the former now rode in silence—their breath bound, and their voices hushed in the deathlike stillness of terror.

All at once a cry arose from the guerrilla—short, quick, and despairing—the voice of some new consternation; at the same moment, the whole troop were seen to pull up.

We looked for the cause of this extraordinary conduct; our eyes and ears both guided us to the explanation. From the opposite direction, and scarcely three hundred yards distant, appeared a band of horsemen coming up at a gallop. They were right in the moon's eye, and we could see glancing arms, and hear loud voices. The hoofs could be heard pounding the prairie, and my companion and I recognised the heavy tread of the American horse. Still more certain were we about that hoarse 'hurrah.' Neither Indian nor Mexican could have uttered that well-known shout.

'Hooraw!—the rangers!' cried Garey, as he echoed the cry at the full pitch of his voice.

The guerrilleros, stupified by surprise at sight of this new enemy, had paused for a moment—no doubt fancying it was another party of Indians. Their halt was of short duration; the dim light favoured them; rifles already played upon their ranks; and suddenly wheeling to the left, they struck out into the open plain.

The Indians, seeing them turn off, leaned into the diagonal line to intercept them; but the rangers, already close up, had just made a similar movement, and savage and Saxon were now obliquing towards each other!

The moon, that for some minutes had been yielding but a faint light, became suddenly eclipsed by a cloud, and the darkness was now greater than ever. Garey and I saw no more of the strife; but we heard the shock of the opposing bands; we heard the war-whoop of the savage mingling with the ranger's vengeful shout; we heard the 'crack, crack, crack' of yäger rifles, and the quick detonations of revolvers — the clashing of sabre-blades upon spear-shafts—the ring of breaking steel—the neighing of steeds—the victor's cry of triumph—and the deep anguished groan of the victim.

With anxious hearts, and nerves excited to their utmost, we stood upon the cliff, and listened to these sounds of dread import.

Not long did they last. The fierce struggle was soon over. When the moon gleamed forth again, the battle was ended. Prostrate forms, both of man and horse, were lying upon the plain.

Far to the south, a dark clump was seen disappearing over the prairie's edge: it was the cowardly guerrilla. To the west, horsemen galloped away, alone, or in straggling groups; but the cheer of triumph that reached us from the scene of strife told us who were the masters of the ground. The rangers had triumphed.

'Whur ur ye, Bill?' cried a voice from the bottom of the cliff, which both of us easily recognised.

'Hyar I be,' answered Garey.

'Wal, we've gin them Injuns goss, I reck'n; but cuss the luck, the yeller-bellies hev got clur off. Wagh!'

FOG-SEAS OF THE MOON.

On the evening of the 2d of January in the present year, the erratic moon passed, while on her wanderings, between the earth and the planet Jupiter. The planet was wide awake, sparkling with brilliancy at the time; but the movements of Cynthia were so brisk, that he found himself excluded from the benefit of earth-shine before he could turn himself round. In ninety short seconds, his pleasant face was entirely hidden from the friendly observers who were watching it from their stations upon the terrestrial sphere.

Although, upon this occasion, the grave and majestic Olympian star was caught at disadvantage by the nimble luminary of the silver horns, he did not lose his ordinary self-possession; his placid temperament proved to be fully equal to the emergency. Having remained quietly in concealment for about sixty minutes, he glided calmly out from behind the screen which had been interposed between him and his terrestrial friends, and as he did so, adroitly turned the tables upon the moon, by giving a sly hint or two concerning certain secrets which it was her intention to have held in reserve from her curious neighbours here below. The readers of *Chambers's Journal*, trained as they have been to like the *bonbons* of science, will be glad to hear how the astute Jovian star contrived to retaliate upon the sprightly night-queen, by throwing light upon her obscurities, in return for the temporary obscuration he suffered at her horns.

During the recent occultation of the planet Jupiter, one-half of the civilised territory of the earth was fairly bristling with telescopes turned towards the edge of the moon. An occultation of any of the larger planets is always an occurrence of surpassing interest to astronomers, because the clear, well-defined images which they present in good telescopes, are pictures of such exquisite delicacy, that they afford a very severe test of the condition of the lunar surface as to the presence or absence of gaseous or vaporous investment, when that surface is seen in front of the picture in the act of sweeping before it; the smallest amount of vapour or gas would perceptibly dim and distort the delicately sketched light image contemplated under such circumstances. When it is Jupiter that undergoes occultation, there is also additional interest, because this planet is waited upon by four satellites of considerable brilliancy, which have to pass in succession behind, and out from, the border of the moon; so that there are, as it were, five occultations in one to be observed.

During the recent occultation of Jupiter, a large number of excellent observations were recorded. From among the trustworthy observers, Messrs W. R. Grove, Dawes, Hartnup, and J. Watson, Dr Mann and Lord Wrottesley agreed in the positive statement that there was no perceptible alteration of the planet's figure, or distortion of outline, while the planetary image was in apparent contact with the moon, and under good optical definition. Mr William Simms and Mr Lassell, on the other hand, described the curved outline of the planet as appearing to be flattened, or bent outwards towards the moon's limb. Mr Lassell's observation, however, affords a suggestion for the ready explanation of this discrepancy. This gentleman noted distortion as the planet went behind the moon, but distinctly states that there was none as it came out from concealment; and further remarks, that the *air was very unsettled*, and vision very unsteady at the commencement, but the definition much more even and satisfactory at the conclusion of the occultation. Mr William Simms also says that the atmosphere at Carshalton, where his observation was made, was very unsteady. In all probability, the distortion of the planet's figure, noticed by these observers, was due to the *unfavourable state of the earth's own atmosphere* at their stations, causing the image of the planet to tremble and undulate while under inspection.

Mr Hartnup and Dr Mann noticed that the line-like segment of the planet's disc was broken up into three or four beads of light, just before it finally disappeared behind the moon. This result was due to small projections of the moon's border then crossing the streak of light in some places, while portions of the streak were still visible at indentations of the lunar edge in others. Mr Hartnup saw the third satellite of the planet *shining in the midst of a large indentation* of this kind for a second or two, and looking as if within the circumference of the lunar face. Professor Challis, employing the great Northumberland refractor at Cambridge, noticed that the moon's dark limb, as it swept in front of the bright planetary surface, was distinctly jagged and zigzagged by valleys and mountain-peaks.

As the planet slipped out from behind the *bright side* of the half-illumined six-day-old moon, the different characters of the planetary and lunar light were strikingly apparent. The planet's face was about as pale again as the moon's, and seemed to most of the observers watching it to wear, as compared with the moon's aspect, a soft greenish hue. Mr Lassell was of opinion that the planetary faintness was mainly the result of the relatively large brilliant surface the moon presented in such close proximity; he believed that there would not have seemed anything like so marked a difference of intensity, if the planet had been contemplated in contact with a piece of the moon, having dimensions not larger than itself.

But the most interesting fact yet remains to be told. The bright border of the moon at this time crossed the soft green face of the planet, not with a clear sharply cut outline like that which had been presented as the disc passed into concealment; it was fringed by a streak or band of graduated shadow, commencing at the moon's edge as a deep-black line, and being then stippled off outwardly until it dissolved away in the green light of the planet's face. This shade-band was about a tenth part of the planet's disc broad, and of equal breadth from end to end. Mr Lassell described it as offering to his practised eye precisely the same appearance that the obscure ring of Saturn presents to a higher magnifying power, where that appendage crosses in front of the body of the Saturnian sphere.

There could be no mistake concerning the actual existence of this curious and unexpected apparition. It was independently noticed and described by at least six trustworthy observers, and the descriptions of it given by each of these corresponded with the minutest accuracy. The shadow was seen and described by Mr Lassell, at Liverpool; by the Rev. Professor Challis, at the observatory of Cambridge; by the Rev. W. R. Dawes, at Wateringbury; by Dr Mann and Captain Swinburne, R.N., at Ventnor; and by Mr William Simms, at Carshalton. It therefore only needs that the unusual presence should be accounted for: the handwriting being there, the question remains to be answered: 'Can its interpretation be found?' Can science read the meaning of this shadow-fringe inscription? Are there minds that can fathom, as well as eyes that could catch, this signal-hint thrown out by Jupiter at the instant of its emergence from its forced concealment behind the moon?

It was Mr Dawes's impression on the instant, that the mysterious shadow was simply an optical spectrum—a deep-blue fringe to the light maze caused by the object-glass of his telescope having been accidentally over-corrected for one of the irregularities incident to chromatic refraction. This notion, of course, became altogether untenable so soon as it was known that the same appearance had been noted by other telescopes, in which the same incidental imperfection had no place. All felt that the shadow could not be referred to a regular atmospheric investment of the moon's solid sphere, because under such circumstances the streak should have been always seen when the rim of the moon rested in a similar way across a planetary disc. The sagacious Plumian professor of astronomy at Cambridge, Professor Challis, seems to have been the first to hit upon the true interpretation of the riddle. This indefatigable star-seer has long suspected that the broad dark patches of the lunar surface—the *seas* of the old selenographists—are really shallow basins filled by a sediment of vapour which has settled down into those depressions; in other words, he conceives that there are FOG-SEAS, although there are no WATER-SEAS, in the moon. The general surface and higher projections of the lunar spheroid are altogether uncovered and bare; but vapours and mists have rolled down into the lower regions in sufficient quantity to fill up their basin-like hollows, exactly as water has gravitated into the beds of the terrestrial oceans. The professor, using the high powers of the magnificent telescope furnished to the Cambridge Observatory by the munificence of the late Duke of Northumberland, was able to satisfy himself that the planet actually did come out from behind a widely gaping hollow of the moon's surface—at the bottom of a lunar fog-sea, *seen edgeways*, so to speak. If a shallow basin extended for some distance round the curvature of the lunar spheroid, and if it were filled up with vapour, that vapour would rest at a fixed level, exactly after the manner of a collection of liquid, and such fixed level would be concentric with the general spheroidal curvature of the satellite. Under such an arrangement, there would therefore necessarily be a bulging protuberance of the vapour-surface, through which a remote luminary might be seen, when it rested in the requisite position. This, then, is Professor Challis's understanding of Jupiter's hint. The moon has *fog-seas* upon her surface, and the band of shadow visible upon the face of Jupiter as the planet came out from behind the earth's satellite, was a thin upper slice of one of those fog-seas seen by the favourable accident of the planet's light shining for the instant from beyond. Destiny was, upon this occasion, propitious to the phalanx of terrestrial observers standing so resolutely and patiently to their telescopes, and brought the planet, which had gone into occultation at a spot where there was high and rough ground, out at a point where the moon's limb was smooth, and depressed below the general level. It is, of course, only when occulted luminaries pass behind such depressed localities, that these shade-bands ought to present themselves, if Professor Challis's shrewd interpretation be a reading of the truth.

THREE CHAPTERS OUT OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER III.

Ascent is hard—descent only too easy; in accordance with this truth, our descent of the Dschugdschur did not take one-third of the time we had spent in climbing it. Altogether, we were about sixteen hours passing over the mountain; and what with encountering swarms of mosquitoes, wasps, and gadflies during the whole time, we, together with our horses and reindeer, were so thoroughly worn out, that we could not proceed a step. For this reason, we halted as soon as we had reached the foot of the mountain, and looked about for a spot where we might encamp for the night. After unloading the horses, we kindled a fire to drive away the insects, and made tea: just as we were drinking the second cup, my dog, which was loose, came running from the forest, whining and barking that we might understand there was a wild beast somewhere in the neighbourhood. I know not what became of the weariness we had felt until then, or of the heat from which we suffered, or of the hunger and thirst not yet appeased. I took my gun, looked to the priming, saw that the flint was right, seized a knife, and ran off after the dog; my young Cossack and one of the Yakut guides following me. The dog led us a second time to the top of the Dschugdschur: when we had reached it, we saw a mass of stone forming a level table, which jutted out half-way up the side of a perpendicular rock; on this stood an animal called a wild-sheep. There were trees some distance apart, up the side of the rock; so by means of them we swung ourselves down from branch to branch, till we were within 600 yards of it, then we all three fired at it together. Had the wild-sheep been killed on the spot where it stood, one of us, with a long staff and a rope in his hand, would have been let down, hunter fashion, by means of another rope, to the projecting rock beneath: there he would have fastened one end of his cord round the horns of the sheep; the other he would have held in his teeth whilst we drew him up again. In the same manner, we should have dragged up the sheep; at least so we intended; but the animal, when hit, rolled on its side, and so slipped over the edge of the rock, falling down a precipice beneath, of which we could scarcely see the bottom; and the noise that its horns made striking the stones as it fell, raised a loud echo amidst the mountain. It was dashed from stone to stone, and scarcely a morsel of the body remained whole by the time it had reached the bottom. Returning to the place where we had halted for the night, I saw a new kind of sport. My dog frightened some nine or ten birds that were on the ground; they flew up, and perched on the low boughs of a young birch. Quick as thought, snap went the lock of my gun; just as I was pulling the trigger, the Yakut guide caught my arm, saying: 'You may spare your powder and shot, for we shall catch these birds with our hands.'

No sooner had he said this than he pulled out his knife and cut a long switch, breaking off all the twigs; then he fastened a hair-noose to the end of it, and went gently up to a bird, holding the noose up before it. The bird stretched out its neck to see what manner of thing this might be; thereupon the guide slipped the noose over its head, and pulled it off the tree. After he had thus taken it and wrung its neck, he did the same to another; and so, one by one, to all; catching them every one with the same noose.

The name of this bird in Yakutisch is karüky. It is larger than the hazel-hen (*Tetrao bonasia*), and smaller than the spotted black-cock, though the plumage is like that of the latter. In form it is thick, with a short neck; the flavour is like that of black-cock. I have never seen it anywhere except on the way to Udskoi, and even there it is very seldom found. I suppose that predatory birds and four-footed animals, knowing its simple nature, easily make it their prey, and thus it is nearly exterminated.

Every night after we had descended the Dschugdschur, and until we reached Udskoi, as soon as we had chosen our quarters, we would go to some bay or inlet of the river, and throw out three hair fishing-nets, which we had brought with us for that purpose. In the morning, perhaps, we found two or three fishes in them, of the kind called charius (*Salmo thymallus*). These were most acceptable, for, without them, we should have had nothing to eat but coarse barley-meal and rancid butter.

In this manner we journeyed on until the middle of summer, by which time we had reached Udskoi. Udskoi stands on the left shore of a river of the name of Ud, and is built in a tolerably large valley lying between the mountains. It is distant about nine kös from the Sea of Okhotsk. The inhabitants are as follows—a Russian clergyman, a clerk, a Cossack captain over about fifty men, three or four Yakuts, and from three to four hundred Tungouses. Not one of these last has a house or any settled place of abode: they all wander about, summer and winter, following the chase.

As I had been commanded to make myself acquainted with the habits and the mode of hunting pursued by these people, it was necessary that I should inspect the whole country. For this purpose, after resting a while at Udskoi, I set off in a boat with two Cossacks and two guides, for the mouth of the river Ud, which flows into the sea.

Two or three Yurte-Tungouses dwell at the mouth of the Ud; they catch a great many fishes called kätä (a kind of salmon-trout) and seals, and get a great store of train-oil from the whales, of which every year they are sure to kill two or three from thirty-five to forty feet long. These whales are washed up into the mouth of the Ud.

They kill the large seals by shooting them through the head; small ones which are left high and dry by the ebb of the tide, they destroy by blows with a club. Thongs and straps are cut from the seal-skins; that which remains is hung in the smoke to dry, and then made into soles for shoes. The strength and durability of this skin is greater than that of any other animal.

There is great abundance of ducks and geese, and an enormous number of different kinds of sea-fowl. They come flying inland at high-water, and not finding room enough on the small islands, all huddle down one upon the other. I have sometimes killed a score of them at a single shot when they have been flying up again.

I remained four days at the mouth of the Ud, and then returned to Udskoi, taking with me six men. We travelled in two boats which we had hollowed out of poplars. The first day, on account of the violence of the stream, we had to make our way up the river by the help of poles tipped with iron. Rain fell in the evening and during the whole night, so that on the morning of the second day the river overflowed its banks, and extended on either side to the thick woods on the shore. In that neighbourhood the rain falls, at this season, day and night for fifteen or sixteen days; so that if we had tarried on that account, we should have been delayed so long that provisions and strength would have failed us. We therefore resolved to spare no labour in getting on as quickly as possible, and for five days keeping close inshore, we pulled ourselves onwards from tree to tree. At the end of that time, our provisions were gone, our strength was exhausted, and we were at a distance of three kös by water, and one and a half by land from Udskoi.

Our guide assured me that if we went by land, the three or four brooks we should have to cross would prove no great hinderance to our journey through the forest; therefore I got up the next morning at sunrise, took a gun and a hatchet, and set off on foot with a Cossack and the guide, determining to reach Udskoi that night, and send back provisions to those who were left in the boat. But we were not able to fulfil our intention; for when we had gone about half a kös from the boat, we came to the first brook, which, rising at some little distance, had flooded the forest with its waters. Whilst we went round in order to cross it at the spring, wading waist-deep in water, we lost half of the day. In the evening, at sunset, we came to a second stream, many kös in length, which it was impossible to cross in the same manner; so we were obliged to pass the night there in the rain, without any kind of covering. We sent off the guide alone, in a *prahm* we constructed able to hold one person, in order that when he had reached Udskoi, he might send off a man with a boat to us. At sunset, to our joy, we saw two men approaching with boats. We crossed with them, and reached Udskoi about midnight, with not a dry thread in our clothes, and having tasted no food for two days. In this way we had travelled in our wet clothes for seven days, and yet not one of us took any harm.

Our second journey from Udskoi was attended with even more difficulties than this first. It was in the month of September; the nights were beginning to get cold, and all the water of no great depth was frozen. I had gone by water with my Cossack and three guides to a place about ten kös distant, where an assembly of the Tungouses was to be held, and some dispute settled. I posted back from this place to Udskoi with reindeer, and the first fall of snow came down on the spot where we halted at night.

When the guides got up the next morning, they could find only one out of our ten reindeer; a wolf had made its appearance in the night, and they were all scattered hither and thither. The three guides set out to find them, but I remained behind with my Cossack. Three days passed, and not one of the guides returned; in the meantime, rain and snow fell without ceasing. We had taken provisions for only six or seven days, and they were almost entirely consumed. The place where we had stopped was covered with water; in a word, our stay there was an intolerable hardship. On the fourth day, the guides returned with six reindeer, which they had had great difficulty in finding; they could not discover any traces of the remainder. Immediately on their arrival, we set to work to thaw our tent, which was covered three fingers thick with ice and snow: this we accomplished with great trouble, and then continued our journey on the same day. On the second day, we reached the border fortress.

After about ten days' preparation, I started on my long journey, taking with me two Cossacks, two guides, and about thirty reindeer. This was the end of September, when all the water is frozen, and the snow falls in great masses.

We travelled south-east to Borukan, distant about fifty kös from Udskoi. It is about four kös from the sea, and three or four days' journey from the mouth of the river Amur, which falls into the sea. From Borukan to the source of the Byraja, is about fifty kös; the Byraja is about thirty kös distant from the river Silimdschi; and it is some sixty kös from the Silimdschi to Udskoi.

On the first day, we dismounted from our reindeer at a place where we intended halting for the night, having travelled about two kös. We immediately unloaded the reindeer, and turned them loose, binding a piece of wood as thick as a man's arm, and four or five feet long, across the necks of those that were not quite tame; so that if on the following morning, when the guides went to catch them, they should run away, this wood knocking against their knees would prevent them from going far.

Next, one of the guides with a long piece of wood pierced the snow until he came to the bottom and found hard ground; then I and my two Cossacks, with the help of shovels which we had brought with us, cleared away the snow. One of the guides split wood into small pieces, to make a fire; and another cut off about thirty boughs, stripped them of the small branches, and dragged them to the place where we had cleared away the snow. Three of these poles were then tied together at one end; the other ends were stuck into the ground far apart, and the remaining poles were placed round these; the whole being thickly covered with reindeer skins, sewn together, so that there was only one small aperture for the smoke to pass through. This cone-shaped *yurte* was then covered with snow, a small opening being left on one side of it, through which, with some trouble and by stooping, you could crawl in and out. We next collected a number of small twigs, spread them thickly inside the yurte, and covered them with heaps of skins rolled tightly together. In the middle of the yurte we made a fire of split wood, and melted the snow with which we had filled the pot and the tea-kettle.

By the time we had melted the snow, cooked and eaten our tea and supper, and were undressed and asleep, it was midnight. The fire we had kindled, and the burning of the loose soil, produced such thick impenetrable smoke, that it made our eyes smart, so that we could not see, and rendered the interior of the yurte quite invisible.

We were awake and up before dawn, digging our clothes out of the snow in which they had been buried to draw out the damp. As soon as we were dressed, we had tea. When it was quite light, the guides took their ropes, and went to catch the reindeer. The manner of doing this is as follows: You take a thin rope about twenty fathoms long, and wind it round your right hand until it is about the size of the small cup out of which the Russians drink tea; both ends of the rope you hold in your left hand, and from a distance of about ten fathoms, you throw the ball over the horns of the reindeer: unless you miss your aim, it darts over them as swift as an arrow, so that it whistles as it cuts the air. As soon as the reindeer feels the rope, it stands quite still; you then pass another rope round its head, and proceed to take its companions in the same manner.

As soon as the reindeer were caught and assembled, we put the packsaddles upon them, and loaded them, so that they were ready to start by sunrise. We had previously stripped the yurte of the sewn skins that covered it, and rolled them up, and had packed away the cooking utensils and the cups used on the previous night. We travelled in this manner for seven months, during the whole winter, never sleeping in a warm house for a single night. We halted at three stations, each time for about two days, and we there met some ten Yurte-Tungouses.

This broad expanse of about 200 kös consists of thick woods, rocks, and streams; but you meet with no roads. The Tungouse guides know every river, and every brook even, by name, and they reach the place to which they are going without any difficulty, and without once losing themselves. In many places, the snow falls a full fathom deep; this they break through in their snow-shoes, and lead the unladen reindeer. You have to make your way on foot through a thick impenetrable underwood, which sometimes extends for three or four versts, cutting out a path with your knife. In difficult places like these, it is impossible to traverse more than a kös a day.

In the middle of winter, we came to the lofty mountain of Byraja. We passed one night at the foot of it; and having laid aside our upper garments for the pull, we reached the heights only as the evening twilight of the following day was ending. Here we met with innumerable difficulties: we had to shovel away the deep snow—frozen hard on the surface—and right before us rose a perpendicular rock. When one man, with immense exertion, had climbed to the top of it, he drew up one of the guides with a rope; all the baggage was then taken off the reindeer, and drawn up separately by ropes, and the reindeer were drawn to the summit. After this, we ourselves ascended by the help of ropes.

The hardship of such a day will never be forgotten. Poor and insufficient food, wind that one could not face, and intolerable cold—all these had oppressed, and now assailed me. In appearance, I did not differ from one of the Tungouses. Wind and the cold in the daytime, and the smoke and heat of the fire at night, had dyed my face a deep yellow; my hair and the shape of my nose were the only signs that remained of my being a civilised Russian.

In climbing the mountain, I had been much heated; so, for want of water, I ate some snow, and this struck the cold into me. Scarcely had we reached our halting-place for the night, when I became very ill. The blood rushed to my head, and my face burned like fire. There was no physician near; and lying there in winter, on the top of a high mountain, in a biting wind, my case was dangerous.

I shall not now speak of the struggle between life and death, nor of the care of my Cossacks and the guides, who pitied me with their whole hearts, watched by me and attended on me, taking care, above all, that the covering should not be thrown off, and the cold reach me, which would have been certain death. In the morning, I fell asleep; at mid-day, when I awoke, I found myself covered with perspiration, as if I had just come out of the water. In the evening, nothing remained of my illness except a headache. Nature had cured me better than any physician. The following morning we continued our journey. At the end of seven months, I had accomplished my business, and returned to Udskoi.

The country through which I travelled is characterised by its impassable roads, fearful forests, insurmountable mountains, and numberless streams. It abounds in animals; namely, the panther, bear, wolf, glutton, lynx, black and red fox, sable, squirrel, hare, otter, elk, wild reindeer, roe, fallow-deer, wild-sheep, musk, wild-boar, ermine, flying squirrel, bats, and all kinds of mice. Then of birds, there are the white stork, swan, duck, goose, crane, black-cock, the hazel-hen or gelinotte, the white grouse or ptarmigan, the Russian black duck, the karäky, and the snipe.

I remained in Udskoi for a fortnight, and completed the imperial commission with which I had been intrusted; then, in the month of April, I started for Yakutsk. Travelling at this time of the year is most dangerous. The hungry bear rushes blindly upon the first creature that crosses his path. In April, the ice in the rivers breaks up; at the same time, water pours down from the mountains, and not only broad rivers, but tiny streams which one might have stepped across, overflow their banks, and go foaming and boiling among the thick woods. As you wade through one of these brooks, the water, which at other times barely reaches the body of the reindeer, washes, by the force of the torrent, quite over the saddle.

One day, as I was riding across a river, my reindeer stumbled against a great round stone under water, and fell. In an instant, the water was foaming over my shoulders, and if I had not supported myself with a stick that I had in my hand, and held fast to the saddle, I should have fallen, and the stream would have carried me away. Had this been the case, no human power, nor speed, nor understanding, could have rescued me. In some places, we had to stand upon the black banks, which are the height of a man, and to push the reindeer, one and all, into the rivers beneath. Whilst they were standing breast-high in water, we dropped down adroitly into the saddles, and so rode over. In this manner, we had to cross about ten streams in the course of a day. At night, you cannot find any place for halting, because the water from the mountains has turned the dry ground into knee-deep mud.

It is of no use to think of building a yurte, or pitching a tent and kindling a fire; so, without even taking the trouble to look for a dry place, you cut two thick boughs, and throw them down; then you spread some young larches over them, and on the top of these you pile all the baggage. The young larch-trees have also to serve for a bed. To kindle a fire in such places, and to make tea and cook food, is a matter requiring great skill, nevertheless necessity compels one to do it.

Thus I journeyed on, till I again reached the banks of the Utchur. After remaining there fourteen or fifteen months, until my business was completed, I returned to Yakutsk, where I arrived at midsummer, having struggled with unheard-of difficulties for a year and a half.

And here the Third Chapter out of my Life must close.

LOVE.

Oh! would I had the wealth of worlds,
The monarch's crown of gold—
And all the gems in secret caves
This wondrous earth doth hold—
The countless pearls that gleam unknown
Beneath the deep blue sea—
Oh! would I had such wealth, that I
Might scorn it all, for thee.

Oh! would I were, in courtly halls,
The bright and shining star—
The glitt'ring magnet, for a world
To gaze on from afar—
That I might scorn the kingly throng,
The world, on bended knee—
All for a simple cottage home,
With nought but love, and thee.

I care not for the golden wealth,
Nor sigh in courts to shine—
I only care, I only sigh
To know thy heart is mine.
Far more to me, than gem, or gold,
Or jewel of the sea,
Would be that simple cottage home,
With nought but love, and thee. V.

TYPE OF A BURMESE VILLAGE.

Select an easy, rolling slope, with knolls and tangled thickets, gently declining from a range of heavily timbered hills. Flank it on either side with interminable jungle, affording secure cover for the various forest-life. In front of all, train a wide, rapid, darkly discoloured stream, abundantly stocked with alligators, water-oxen, and other such fishy game; and fill up your background with teak-forests and remote mountains, with here and there some paddy-fields between, which shall pasture your wild elephants. Cover your ground with creepers, cactuses, canes, and various tropical vegetation in a wilderness of profusion. In among these, plant your native bamboo huts as thickly as you can, and with picturesque freedom of arrangement. —*The Golden Dagon.*

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FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES.

It is said that in former times the dons at Cambridge were singularly punctilious in requiring the ceremony of introduction before they would permit the slightest intercourse between themselves and anybody else. Amongst the many *facetiæ* of the university, there is a story current on this subject. A fellow of Trinity was one day walking by the Cam in stormy weather, when he saw a man in the water struggling for his life. The fellow was an excellent swimmer, and his first impulse naturally was to jump in to the rescue. He had one foot already in the air, when he suddenly recollected that the drowning man was an utter stranger. On this he paused, and cried out in an agony of distress: 'What a pity that I never was introduced to that man!'

There are some characteristics essentially British in reference to this same talismanic influence of introduction. You sit by a man at a theatre, or any other public place; you guard jealously against any infringement of your rights on his part, though he may be a Falstaff, and you could creep into an alderman's thumb-ring; you bristle up if he dares to touch upon the space for which you have legally and honestly paid; you look daggers at him if he ventures a whisper in the midst of an interesting scene, and are ready for an open remonstrance if he hums the airs to himself, or beats the devil's tattoo upon the floor. All at once enters a mutual acquaintance, who pronounces but four words—Mr Smith, Mr Jones; Mr Jones, Mr Smith. No abracadabra in the vocabulary could produce a more magical transformation. You are seized instantly with a profound desire to administer to all the little comforts which the larger bulk of your fat neighbour requires: you tuck in your coat-tails; you put your neighbour on the other side out of patience by shifting your legs out of the way of your new friend; you listen with patience to all kinds of absurd remarks which he may choose to utter in the very midst of the *dénouement* of the piece; you are willing to assist him in catching the air of the comic song, and would lend him your back to beat his tattoo upon. And all this because a man who, a week ago, may have been to you as entire a stranger as himself, has simply uttered his name before you.

Something of the same kind may be found in a nation of which many of the characteristics are the same as our own—the Dutch. A burgher of the famous suburb of Amsterdam—where, it is said, they sweep out every morning the bed of the canal with a hearth-broom—was once quietly smoking in the back-parlour of his residence, when a rap, much louder than ordinary, was heard at the door, and an officer entered in the Austrian imperial livery. The new-comer announced that the Emperor Joseph II. was on his way to visit the renowned retreat of the Holland merchants, and as the mansion of mynheer was amongst the most celebrated as a marvel of comfort and cleanliness, he intended to honour its master with a call.

'He will of course bring with him a proper introduction,' observed the burgher.

'It is his imperial majesty the Emperor Joseph II.,' replied the messenger—'the first potentate in Europe; and he is not likely to suppose anything further will be required of him than to announce himself.'

'I know nothing of your emperor,' replied the Dutchman; 'he does not belong to my acquaintance; and if he were even the burgomaster of Amsterdam in person, I would not admit him without a proper presentation.' The Hollander then resumed his pipe, and the emperor was forced to return without a more intimate acquaintance with a Dutch merchant's villa than mere hearsay.

The nations of Latin race know nothing of all this. You may notice an Italian in a public conveyance—on the one side of him is an intimate acquaintance, on the other an utter stranger; and yet he will carry on conversation with both for an hour without your being able to pronounce which is the acquaintance and which the stranger. Since the time-honoured custom of kissing amongst southern nations is gone somewhat out of fashion, there is no outward and visible sign by which any man in those countries evinces that the man he meets is a friend or otherwise. He takes off his hat to the person of whom he asks the way to his hotel; he takes off his hat to his own brother. He is profuse in his expressions of regard to a man whose name he certainly does not know how to spell; and perhaps the chief distinction between his address to the said man and to one of his own relatives is, that it would be warmer and more demonstrative to the former than to the latter. Let any one demand the price of a piece of salmon from a French fishwoman whom he sees for the first time. It is ten to one that when she names the price, she will add: 'For you, monsieur.' This 'pour vous' is one of the commonest phrases in every French mouth. It is naturally applied in cases of long acquaintance; and though not so naturally, yet often with more truth applied to a fresh acquaintance; for the southerner, who admires novelty as he admires every other excitement, will do more for a new-comer than for an old friend.

There is no doubt that all this increases the pleasure of visiting the cities of the south, and has a wonderful effect on first impressions. The cause has been assigned, in the first place, to the natural temperament of the inhabitants of Southern Europe; and, secondly, to their habit of passing so much of their time in public gardens, cafés, and other places where they are constantly apt to encounter strangers. We do not believe either of these to be the principal cause, and we demur to the first altogether. It is extremely common among foreigners to hear people talk of the English temperament as if it were a thing fixed and undeviating. Now, we will answer for it, that out of twenty Englishmen taken at random, you will find every extreme of temperament—the most passionate with the most calm, the most frank with the most reserved, the most careless and sociable with the most nervous and retiring. The great success of our countrymen all over the world is in great part owing to the diversity of temperament, whereby the proper man is, sooner or later, sure to be forthcoming for every exigency. The fact may be owing to our descent from so great a variety of races. Assuming it to be a truth, we altogether deny that any national characteristics of our own country, in respect of manners, are due to temperament. It may in truth be asserted, that the nation which possesses the greatest variety of temperament, presents at the same time the most uniform and decided system of manners.

The principal cause of the difference of the bearing towards strangers in our own country, and in those of Southern Europe, is the different meaning we attach to an acquaintance. An acquaintance in France or Italy means a man whose name you know, and to whom you speak when you meet him. The chances of getting further than this are so remote, that they have no more influence on the proceeding than the idea with an Englishman that a new friend may one day turn out a son-in-law. In England, on the contrary, when a man makes an acquaintance, the idea of its ripening into something like friendship is generally present to his view. In France, however small may be a man's income, he invariably counts among his expenses a given sum for pleasure; just as we should for any ordinary necessary of life. He would stare if you were to hint that he might leave out this item upon an emergency. But, even where the fortune is large, a Frenchman, when he takes an apartment, rarely dreams of having a spare room attached to it. Here, on the contrary, a man seldom reckons pleasure amongst the absolute necessities of his expenditure; but then, when he takes a house, he likes to have a spare bed in it. Then the lurking idea in the mind of the one is to spend his time of recreation with acquaintances, and in that of the other, with friends.

There are other reproaches besides that of stiffness in our intercourse with strangers, which are made against us from the same cause. If the freedom of Englishmen is spoken of on the continent, the reply almost invariably is, that if we are not slaves to our kings, we are slaves to our customs, and that the tyranny of etiquette is just as bad as any other. We should be sorry to have to count the number of times in which we have heard the English rule, that a man is not to salute a lady in the street till she has first set the example, cited as an instance of British social slavery. But the fact is, that a salutation on the continent means taking the hat off, and nothing else. With us, it means a great deal more, and would give liberties to persons who may chance to obtain a mere ball-room introduction, which, in our peculiar social position, might lead to very unpleasant results. In all nations, peculiarities, when once explained, mean very little. It is the commonest, but one of the gravest of mistakes, to judge a nation by its peculiarities.

There is much that is graceful, no doubt, in the French mode of understanding acquaintanceship. If one riding party of pleasure in the Pyrenees, for instance, meets another, the two parties instantly salute. This is in itself gracious, and means in addition, that if there is any small service that the one party can render to the other, it will be cheerfully given. France is, in truth, the land of small services. With us, there is always the idea present, that such an act might be construed into something further. Our outward manners suffer in consequence, and something more perhaps, as in many instances small services may be avoided, under the impression that if they were given, larger might be required. The southern nations have no such fear, for, with them, great services are as rare as small ones are common. It is on this that the essential differences between the manners of the south and of the north of Europe are mainly founded.

The external grace of manner is as apparent amongst the French in the more difficult task of bowing strangers out as of ushering them in. The famous president, D'Harlay, was a master of the art. The supreme felicity with which he shewed unwelcome visitors the way to the door—the graceful expressions by which he accompanied each step in advance, till they had reached it, and the exquisite bow with which he closed it upon them, formed an artistic *ensemble* which could almost aspire to the name of genius. Even at the present day, the art of bowing out is an essential part of the education of a man of fashion on the continent. It is an art of which the Englishman has not the least idea: he ordinarily endures the infliction till he loses the patience necessary for the practical exercise of the feat, even if he knew how to perform it theoretically, and even this last useless point is one which he very seldom attains. Madame de Genlis somewhere gives an illustration of the difference of conduct of a French and an English exquisite under difficulties. She, in the first instance, cites the known story of Brummell, who revenged the affronts he had received from the prince-regent, by remarking in his hearing that he had grown as fat as a pig: such, at least, is her version of the story. On the other hand, Louis XV. once amused himself by asking one of his courtiers several times a day how old he was. The dandy repeated some twenty or thirty times that he was forty-five, till at last he lost patience, and told the king that he was forty-six. 'How so?' said the king: 'you told me an hour ago that you were forty-five?' 'That is true, sire; but I was afraid that your majesty would be tired by constantly hearing the same thing.' Goldsmith gives a similar illustration in one of his essays. A Frenchman and an Englishman, during a storm, offer each his cloak to a mutual friend. The Englishman entreats his friend to take the cloak, because, he says, it is not of the smallest use to himself—he would much rather be without it. The Frenchman, on the other hand, does not dissemble the utility of his cloak; in fact, he would not think of offering it to any one except to so dear a friend as his present companion. The tact by which the person present is made to suppose himself favoured above every one else, belongs almost exclusively to the Latin race. A French shopman, in making a bargain, invariably tells you that he offers you the wares at so low a price on account of his personal esteem for you; and this he does in a way that seldom fails to flatter you, notwithstanding the glaring falsity of the notion. If an Englishman were to do the same thing, he would do it in a way which would either disgust you, or cause you to laugh in his face.

The extreme to which this kind of compliment can be carried was reached by the Frenchman, who, when some one trod on his toes, and expressed his hopes that he had not hurt him, replied: 'Au contraire, monsieur.' A similar story is told of an Italian courtier who, when the grand-duke accidentally kicked one of his shins, presented the other with a 'mi fa piacere.'

The innate love of truth which belongs to the

Teutonic character, and which has probably descended to it from the Scythians, is an insuperable barrier to the practice among us of this kind of politeness. Even our coarseness is often nothing more than truth run to seed. No race in the world ever lied with so bad a grace as the British. In nine cases out of ten, an Englishman, when he lies, betrays himself by the *gaucherie* of his manner of doing it. It is the same thing in little as in great things; we can neither carry on a plot by the means of secret societies, nor keep a friend out of our houses by expressions of love and good-will. Even an English farce, when it turns upon deceptions, is sure to be a bad one. When a British statesman tries his hand at a piece of political humbug, there is not a stump-orator who is not able to expose it the next day.

Thus it is that our excuses, as well as our offers of service, get their gloss washed out in this damp island of ours. The glitter of the national costume suffers, no doubt. Butler has declared that there is great pleasure in being cheated; and if any cheat is pleasant, surely it is that of being cheated into the belief that all the world has a peculiar respect for your own individual self. It is true that as gloss is seldom used to cover a good article, there may be some reason alleged in favour of our own linsey-woolsey. It is not always pleasant to look at, but it. bears rough weather.

We must, in some respects, defend the lower classes of the country from the imputation of ill-manners, so constantly levelled against them. Now, let any one who will venture upon such an attempt, or confess that he has ventured upon it, travel in a third-class carriage by an excursion-train. It is at any time worth the while of a student of English manners to make the experiment. Three-fourths of the party will probably consist of women and children, so that you almost forget the quiet Birchin Lane clerk or country shopkeeper, who has ensconced himself in the corner. One of the noisier sex is taking a little child to the sea for a few days' health; another has got a chubby-faced daughter about to see her grandmother for the first time; a third is going down to her sweetheart; almost the whole, in fact, are bent on some errand, either of hope or pleasure. As they tumble in, one after another, each laden with a most incongruous assemblage of packages, parcels, and band-boxes, they find half-a-dozen red hands stretched out to prevent their breaking their shins against the iron step, or rolling one of their misshapen boxes under the carriages. The elder ladies infallibly stick in the doorway, in a manner so ingeniously complex, that it would appear next to impossible for them to be extricated without an alarming sacrifice of personal property. However, they are used to sticking in doorways; and a series of evolutions, somewhat analogous to the bottle-trick of the conjuror, lands them in the inside of the vehicle, after crumpling up the bonnet of one of their neighbours, and knocking a shawl of another under foot—things which the neighbours aforesaid take with such exemplary good-humour, that they seem actually to realise the Italian *mi fa piacere* without saying it. The first act of the new-comer is to fasten her little boy upon somebody's knees, and her baggage upon the first vacant seat, utterly regardless of the certainty that the said seat will be claimed in a few seconds by a fresh influx of visitors. The influx arrives, and the baggage has to be thrust into the holes and corners of the carriage; whereupon commences a universal shuffling of feet, jogging of elbows, and crumpling up of knees, consequent on the spasmodic attempts of the company to pack twice as many articles under the seat as the place will hold; and after the necessary failure of the attempt, they strew the floor with a miscellany of small bags and packages, till it resembles nothing so much as the floor of an ammunition tent after a lost battle. All this, however, is done with the most perfect good-humour and absence of assumption or selfishness. It serves admirably for mutual introduction; the semi-destruction of a bonnet will make a friend for the journey, and a torn shawl would seem almost enough to create a friendship for life. Five minutes after the carriage is full, and the occupants shaken down, every one has picked out a friend, and the whole assembly is in high talk; and in half an hour, the history of the entire party—the object of the journey of each—what are their occupations and their peculiar tastes and talents—are as well known as if Momus had succeeded in his suggestion, that the next batch of mortals should be created with glass windows to their bosoms.

The contrast is certainly striking if you get to the aristocratic regions of a first-class carriage, more especially if it happens to be occupied by ladies; for frequently the behaviour of these to one another is marked by a stiff assertion of rights which amounts to downright incivility; and it is very seldom indeed that it unbends to anything like frankness or good-will. In this respect, the English traveller is a striking contrast to the continental: abroad, the most extreme civility and readiness to oblige is found in every department. In the lowest class, for good-humour and jovialty, the advantage is, without doubt, according to our experience, on the side of the English, who are as cordial to their new associates as the continentals, and more true and open.

It is true that travellers by third-class in England, and almost all classes of foreigners, are in pursuit of pleasure; while in the superior classes in England, every second person, probably, is bound on some disagreeable errand. This makes an enormous difference in their several humours, and is a consideration which ought not to be confined to railway travelling. It is said that of seven persons who pass through Fleet Street, four are going into the city to get money, and three are coming back without it. On the Boulevards at Paris, out of twenty persons, nineteen are in pursuit of pleasure, and the twentieth thinks that he has found it. This ought to enter for no small part into all comparisons of national manners. Even when the Frenchman is on a business errand, he probably has managed so to mix it up with chances and expectations, as to gratify that intense hankering after excitement which is the characteristic of the nation. A Frenchman may carry on business out of necessity, but he never loves it except for the excitement which it may bring him. An Englishman, on the contrary, loves it for its own sake. Hence the demeanour of the one will naturally offer every possible contrast to that of the other; and there is no necessity for going back into national temperaments to find out the cause.

It is thus that the difference between the manners of the north and the south of Europe depends upon the habits rather than upon the temperament of the people. It is habit rather than temperament which with us causes an acquaintanceship to be a serious matter, while it is a mere matter of course with the southern nations. It is certainly not temperament which causes us to look upon business as a plain straightforward thing, with which the individual managing it is alone concerned—not as a medium of excitement and distraction, to be transacted in the midst of a crowd, with all the noise and animation of the habits of the south—habits which, whether conducive to success or not, are unquestionably conducive to the facilities of mutual intercourse. We know nothing more likely to frighten a timid traveller than the thundering noise which bursts at once from the fifty throats of as many continental *boursiers* the moment the clock of the town-hall has done striking twelve. It is, in short, to the different aspect under which our duties, both towards strangers and towards society, present themselves, that our bearing towards strangers is due. In this respect, it is with our manners as with our houses—the dinginess is without, the comfort and hospitality within.

A LADRONE ADVENTURE IN THE CANTON RIVER.

Often has our youthful imagination gloated over the daring deeds and hairbreadth escapes of bandits and pirates, traced in glowing colours by the pen of the poet or the novelist. Fascinated by the halo of romance thrown around their career, the deeds of freebooters rose up before us as the achievements of the purest heroism—their failure or fall, as an unmitigated evil—the more to be deplored on account of the nobility of the victim. These ideas, however, have been thoroughly dispelled. Practical experience has broken the coloured glass through which the deeds and the men were seen; and pirates on the seas, robbers on the highway, banditti among romantic mountains, and others of a similar class, now stand much on a level with housebreakers, pickpockets, and garotters at home. For the benefit of those readers whose imaginations are still spell-bound in the toils of romance, we propose to narrate the incident which first opened our eyes wide enough to see these things in their true light.

It was on a dull day in October 1852, that four of us—namely, our three friends, Jackson, Whymper, Lee, and ourselves, who am Jones, at your service—made up a party for an excursion from Canton down the river. Two of the party were on business, and of course they paid expenses. The others were glad to accept of the two remaining berths in the fast boat, in order to enjoy a couple of days' relaxation from the dull routine of business-life in Canton. We each carried a double-barrelled fowlingpiece, as snipe and other wild-fowl were to be found down the river, and we anticipated that our leisurely sail might be enlivened with good sport. As for personal danger, that was out of the question. Occasional murders, it is true, had been committed on foreigners by the native fishermen down the river, but these were rare; and nobody had ever heard of an attack when more than a couple of Englishmen or Americans had to be met. A fast boat, which was to be our means of conveyance, is a large decked boat, with a house or cabin half sunk in the deck. At each end of the cabin there is a door, which leads up by two or three steps to the level of the deck, and inside there are two beds or berths, ranged on each side, and a dining-table in the centre. Besides this cabin, there is another in the forepart of the vessel, entirely below deck, in which the Chinese crew, who man the boat, find narrow quarters. We also provided ourselves with a pair of punts, each capable of carrying two people, which are useful in landing, crossing creeks, and other coast-service.

Late in the afternoon, we dropped gently down the river, now and again trying our fortune on some unhappy victim, whose flight brought it within reach. The sky was dull, and threatened rain. A dinner, as comfortable as could be enjoyed on board a fast boat, and a social evening passed rapidly away, and we turned in for the night. Next morning, we found ourselves at our destination—the Bogue Forts—where Jackson and Lee had business to transact, which occupied them during the greater part of the day; while Whymper and ourselves found what sport we could. Towards evening, we anchored off Tiger Island, to await the turning of the tide, and a favourable wind, to carry us back to Canton. As night drew on, it became intensely dark and cold, and we were fain to shut out the chill air, by closing both doors and windows all round the cabin. We were thus seated enjoying some of Jackson's famous Burgundy, when we were startled by a sudden shock, as if some other boat had come into collision with ours, and the next moment we heard the report of a fire-pot,* which exploded on the forepart of our deck. We had heard no alarm from our crew, but the truth at once flashed across our minds that we were boarded by a gang of Chinese pirates, and should have to fight for our lives. Whymper, who sat nearest the door leading to the front-deck, immediately jumped out to reconnoitre; but he had no sooner shewn his head above board than he was assailed by half-a-dozen fire-pots, thrown by as many men, who had scrambled over the stern of our boat, and who were followed by as many more. In a moment, he was back in the cabin for his gun; but he had looked long enough to see, by the light of the missiles which had been thrown at him, that our assailants numbered from thirty to forty men, and that they had lashed their boat at right angles across the stern of ours, in the evident expectation that we should be a certain if not an easy prize.

Whymper was again on deck, and had his attention at once arrested by a stout fellow who was coming over the cabin roof, within six yards of where he stood. The pirate held a lighted fire-pot in his hand ready to discharge, which revealed the dim outline of his figure as he advanced; and Whymper, who was now joined by Lee and ourselves, took aim and fired. Owing to the dampness of the powder, the piece missed fire, and the Chinese was within three paces of where we stood, with his arm uplifted to launch his abominable missile, when the second barrel fortunately did its duty, and the man fell heavily on the cabin roof. Five or six men, each with a lighted fire-pot, were now advancing over the cabin roof, while many more were tumbling over the stern into our boat. One, two, three of our pieces were fired in rapid succession among them; each brought down its man, and effected a momentary check; but we only now discovered that in our hurry to face our antagonists, we had omitted to furnish ourselves with ammunition beyond what our artillery was charged with. We had, therefore, to make a hasty expedition into the cabin for our flasks and shot-pouches, and there found, to our dismay, that several fire-pots had been thrown into it and exploded, and were now showering sparks in all directions, and emitting their odorous smoke in volumes. Fortunately, the berths had previously been prepared for immediate occupation; and the woollen coverlets spread over them, protected the wooden frames from the burning sparks, or we should probably have had our citadel burned under our feet. In the midst of this smoke and fire, we groped our way to the further end of the cabin, where our supply of ammunition was deposited, and there a spear-thrust, aimed at Jackson, made us aware that the door at that end had been burst open, and thus exposed us to the danger of a double attack. Jackson was accordingly deputed to defend this point, and, as we afterwards found, he received a very severe burn on the back of his hand in the discharge of this duty. Having furnished ourselves with fresh supplies, which we carried through the cabin with the agreeable idea that a single unlucky spark might send us through the roof, we regained our first position on the front-deck, and were immediately greeted with a perfect shower of fire-pots, shot, and spears. These, with the help of a little dodging, we fortunately escaped, the only effect being the lodgment of a spear-head in the stock of the gun we carried; but we found the odds fearfully increased, and the rascals, taking courage from the temporary lull in our fire, were coming in numbers over the cabin roof to attack us. If they should get near enough to grapple, our lives were not worth an hour's purchase, and, even as it was, the chances seemed tremendously against us; but we knew well that surrender was as hopeless as defeat, and our British blood boiled at the bare idea of succumbing to a crew of Chinese ladrones. It only remained, therefore, to fight it out; and with redoubled energy we poured upon them round after round in quick succession, with as much precision as the fitful glare of their fire-pots would allow. The short screams and heavy falls which followed each discharge informed us that our practice was not without effect; and after ten or fifteen minutes of uninterrupted firing, a partial clearance was effected of the roof of the cabin.

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* A fire-pot, or, as it is more commonly called, a stink-pot, is a small earthenware pipkin, filled with powder and other combustibles: it is lighted by means of a match, and then thrown with the hand. When it falls, it breaks, and emits a shower of sparks, which burn fiercely; these are followed by a dense smoke, and that again by an intolerable and suffocating stench, from which the missile takes its disagreeable name.

At this juncture, and ere we had yet ventured to breathe freely, we observed a man on board the ladrone boat passing a lantern forward to a group of five or six others, who stood in the bow, and whose figures were momentarily shewn in dim relief by the light thus thrown on them. In an instant, Lee's Joe Manton was at his shoulder, and the next moment a piercing scream from the direction where the light had appeared, made it evident that the shot had told. Whether it was their leader or some other person of consequence that Lee had brought down, we never could ascertain; but within half a minute after the shriek which announced his fall, our cabin roof was clear of intruders, and the whole crew of pirates were in full retreat, bearing with them those of their dead and wounded, whom, in their haste, they could conveniently pick up. We then for the first time relaxed our fire, as we had no desire for unnecessary carnage; but their loss had already been severe, amounting, as we afterwards learned, to seven or eight killed, besides several wounded, of whom we could get no exact account. As soon as they were all once more on board their own boat, they pushed off, exclaiming in their own language, that they would come back ere long, and murder the whole of us. They then dropped down the river, and anchored beside two other large boats, about 400 yards off, which had been lying there for some time, and which, as they never either attempted to render us assistance, or even to raise an alarm, we naturally took for accomplices, the crews of which had been drafted out of them to increase the attacking force. The pirates were no sooner out of the way, than our discreet Chinese crew began slowly to emerge from the hatchway of the fore-cabin, where they had concealed themselves the moment they saw the approach of danger, leaving us unaided to defend their boat from plunder. Of the three native boys whom we had with us, one jumped overboard in terror at the very first alarm, another crept down to the forehold beside the crew, and the remaining one, who, by the way, was Lee's servant, alone behaved like a trump, handing charges when required, loading a spare gun, and performing other little pieces of service which considerably facilitated our operations.

The threat uttered by the ladrones as they retired might or might not be a mere bravado; but it seemed not at all unlikely that there might be a sufficient number of reserved men in the two other boats to form a powerful reinforcement; and we were therefore rather disinclined to await a renewal of the fray. The tide, however, had not yet turned; the wind was not in our favour; and the idea of rowing a fast boat against wind, stream, and tide, was out of the question. We had the punts, no doubt, but they carried only two in each, and, including the servants, there were six people required to be accommodated. A council of war was held, and after brief deliberation, we concluded, as there was no other available means of escape, at all hazards to take to the punts. These were accordingly rigged out; and Jackson and Lee took the one, while Whymper and ourselves occupied the other, each boat carrying besides one of the servants. The little vessels were loaded to the water's edge; the night was extremely dark; and the nearest point at which we could hope to find a friend who would receive us, was at Whampoa, a distance of twenty-five miles. Add to this the possibility, if not the probability, of pursuit by the exasperated pirates, which, had they overtaken us, in our present circumstances, would have been certain death, and some idea may be formed of the misery of our position. It was of consequence that our movements should be rapid, and we accordingly plied our strength to make the diminutive crafts fly through the water, while one in each boat strained his eyes to catch the first indications of approaching danger. We rowed thus for upwards of six hours, and arrived at Whampoa about three o'clock in the morning, when we at once made our way to the house of Mr Ward, an old friend of Lee's, who, he assured us, would accord us a hearty welcome. Our appearance was far from prepossessing—our faces begrimed with smoke and powder, our eyebrows and whiskers scorched partially off, our clothes burned in many places, and our hands sooty and smeared with blood; but the worthy old gentleman was no sooner sufficiently awake to understand our tale, than he all but embraced us, in his overwhelming expressions of sympathy. He rung up the servants to prepare hot coffee, spread a groaning table for our midnight tiffin; and after having again heard the particulars of our adventure, and taxed his ingenuity to find words strong enough to express his surprise and admiration, he ushered us to our couches, where we dreamed of Burgundy and fire-pots, snipe-shooting and deck-fighting, sinking punts and hospitable old gentlemen, till pretty far on in the next morning.

As soon as our late breakfast was concluded, our excellent host kindly furnished us with his own boat, and a crew to take us up to Canton, a distance of five miles, which we easily accomplished in an hour. The first object which met our eyes, on approaching the wharf, was the identical fast boat in which we had gone down the river, and which the crew had been able to get under-way within a couple of hours after we left it. Some of us were pretty well known in Canton, indeed any one who resides in Canton for a month cannot but become known to almost every member of the small English community who inhabit what are called the Factories; and when it became public that our fast boat had come back without us, and that it was stained with large quantities of blood, the greatest uneasiness had prevailed. The crew of the boat were questioned, but they could only tell of the fight on board, and that we had left them in the punts. We might have been drowned or murdered after that. As we drew near the wharf, we observed one or two groups of anxious-looking faces, and some excitement of demeanour; but we were no sooner observed approaching the landing, than three hearty cheers announced our welcome, and a dozen hands were held out in congratulation. We then learned also, that by an order from the consulate, to which office two of our party belonged, a government steamer was at that moment getting up steam, to proceed down the river in search of us, as there appeared sufficient ground to suspect that there had been foul play on the part of the natives. The steamer was detained till next day, when the true state of the case being known, and necessary particulars being furnished, it was despatched with a view, if possible, to apprehend some of the pirates, or obtain information as to their whereabouts; but after an absence of two days, it returned without success.

It would be too long to tell how we triumphed as the lions of the Factories for at least a fortnight, till the whole thing had become stale, and we were ourselves tired of being fêted. After that, we settled down again into our old business routine; and we can assure the gentle reader that our brain was never more troubled with romantic dreams of gaily dressed corsairs, a thrust from whose rapier, or a ball from whose pistol, we had fancied must be rather pleasant than otherwise, and whose life bore a charm wherever they went. *Experientia docet*—but the proverb is somewhat musty.

SCIENCE *VERSUS* POETRY.

POETRY has been well defined as

Truth severe in fairy fiction dressed;

for the office of the poet is to hold the mirror up to nature, and, like the painter, give a faithful reflection of whatever he may deem worthy of delineation; whether he reflects the truth of nature direct on the imagination of his reader, or the truth merely as it affects his own feelings and sentiments. Poetry, thus requiring exact accuracy of description, with great variety of embellishment, imperatively demands a correlative amount of knowledge in the poet. Indeed the word muse, as applied to poetical composition, is derived from a Greek phrase signifying to inquire; and as inquiry is the source or parent of all knowledge, the ancients considered the peculiar attribute of the presiding genius of poetry to be a knowledge of all things animate and inanimate, intellectual and corporeal. In every clime, and among every people, the poets were the first historians; and even laws, oracles, moral precepts, and religious rites, were in the earlier ages clothed in verse divine. Then poetry and science were one and the same; now they are at least twin-sisters; and though the onward strides of science are long and rapid, poetry may not, cannot lag behind—the two must ever keep pace, and walk hand in hand together. For, however difficult it may be to assign the definite limits of poetic licence, yet, whenever the poet, overstepping the modesty of nature, illustrates his verses with images founded on unnatural, or, which is the same thing, unscientific conclusions, the pleasure derivable from the poetry is marred by the incongruous associations and distorted fancies presented to our minds. The long muster-roll of qualifications requisite to constitute a poet, as detailed by Imlac to Rasselas, were probably never possessed by any human being; yet such is the inspiration of the art, that few aggressions against natural science are found among many volumes of immortal verse. Of these few, our object is to notice some, if not altogether for the instruction, may we hope for the amusement of the reader.

Hamlet argumentatively says: 'If the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,' and proceeds to draw an inference from his postulate, without in the slightest degree questioning its accuracy. That the sun had such a creative power, and the corruption of animal matter spontaneously produced insects, was the general opinion in the time of Shakspeare; and, in fact, a belief in what naturalists now term equivocal generation, is as ancient as the Augustan era of old Rome, when Virgil, for the benefit of husbandmen, minutely described the whole process of spontaneously producing a swarm of bees. A steer of two years old having first been killed, the poet, as translated by Dryden, thus proceeds:

They leave the beast, but first sweet flowers are strewed
Beneath his body, broken boughs, and thyme,
And pleasing cassia just renewed in prime.
This must be done ere spring makes equal day,
When western winds on curling waters play:
Ere painted meads produce their flowery crops,
Or swallows twitter on the chimney-tops.
The tainted blood, in this close prison pent,
Begins to boil, and through the bones ferment;
Then, wondrous to behold, new creatures rise,
A moving mass at first, and short of thighs;
Till shooting out with legs, and imped with wings,
The grubs proceed to bees with pointed stings,
And more and more affecting air, they try
Their tender pinions, and begin to fly.

In all probability, Virgil was deceived by the very great natural resemblance existing between the bee and the *syrphus*, a species of blow-fly; and though his contemporaries had full faith in the infallibility of his directions, it would be difficult to find any one, at the present day, so ignorant as to believe that insects could be produced in a foreign body, except from eggs previously deposited.

Among all the manifold marvels of nature, nothing is more wonderful than the varied changes insects undergo during their short existence. In the moth tribe, to which we more particularly wish to refer, the egg, deposited in a suitable locality, is in course of time hatched into a crawling, many-legged caterpillar. In this state, it eats voraciously, and casts its skin several times. Having arrived at its full growth as a caterpillar, it casts its skin for the last time, becoming a nymph or chrysalis, an oviform mass without external mouth, eyes, or limbs; and in deathlike torpor awaits its final transformation, when, bursting its cell, it flies forth a beautiful and perfect insect, to propagate its kind, and die in a few days, perhaps hours. This mysterious series of progressive perfectibility has frequently afforded both poet and philosopher a fine emblem of the immortality of the soul; but in the following lines the poet, reversing the real order of nature, erroneously describes the perfect moth as assuming the imperfect state of the nymph:

Thus the gay moth, by sun and vernal gales,
Called forth to wander o'er the dewy vales,
From flower to flower, from sweet to sweet, will stray,
Till tired and satiate with her food and play,
Deep in the shades she builds her peaceful nest,
In loved seclusion pleased at length to rest:
There folds the wings that erst so widely bore,
Becomes a household nymph, and seeks to range no more.

Darwin commits a somewhat similar error, when alluding to the 'old grub, time out of mind the fairies' coachmaker:'

So sleeps in silence the curculio, shut
In the dark chamber of the caverned nut;
Erodes with ivory beak the vaulted shell,
And quits on filmy wings its narrow cell.

Now, the curculio or weevil passes its larva state of existence only in the nut, and having eaten its way out, falls to the ground, where it becomes a chrysalis; and then undergoing its last change, acquires its 'filmy wings' in the earth, and not, as Darwin has it, in 'the vaulted shell.'

Few but have witnessed, in autumnal mornings, the filmy threads termed gossamer, which in some localities are so plentiful as to carpet the earth and clothe the hedges in their shining dew-besprinkled folds. It is now well known that this substance is the work of two species of spider, though naturalists are not as yet agreed with respect to the exact mode of its production. Our ancestors, however, held that gossamer was dew scorched by the sun. Spenser speaks of

The fine nets which oft we woven see
Of scorched dew;

and another poet thus alludes to the same phenomenon

As light and thin as cobwebs that do fly
In the blue air, caused by the autumnal sun,
That boils the dew that on the earth doth lie.

In an old romance, at one time the book of its season, but now completely forgotten, named *Mandeville*, the author describes a ruined castle inhabited by owls and bitterns. Now, though the bittern has been mentioned even in Scripture as the emblem of desolation, it is not the desolation of a ruined castle, but of some wild upland marsh, far from the dwellings of man, irreclaimable by his energies, and incapable of affording sustenance to the animals he domesticates. There the bittern abides in dreary solitude; and in the still nights of spring, ascending by a spiral flight to a great altitude, he serenades his mate, engaged in the maternal duties of the nest below: and it is a most extraordinary serenade. Let the reader fancy a burst of uncouth fiendish laughter, gratingly, piercingly loud, as if the bellow of a bull were mingled with the neigh of a horse, and he will have a faint idea of the wild boom of the bittern—as wild as the desert morass over which it resounds. As the bird booms, the listener really fancies that the unstable quagmire beneath his feet is shaken by the noise; and this circumstance may be accounted for by the general affection of the sentient system caused by the rude jar upon the ear, a feeling experienced with other harsh grating sounds. From a very early period, however, the popular notion has been that the bittern boomed by plunging his bill in the muddy marsh; and Thomson has not only adopted this absurd idea, but also ascribed the season of booming to an earlier part of the year than when it actually takes place:

> As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed,
> And winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
> Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
> Deform the day delightless—so that scarce
> The bittern knows his time, with bill engulfed,
> To shake the sounding marsh; or from the shore
> The plovers, when to scatter o'er the heath,
> And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.

In the *Lady of the Lake*, a fine description of the solitary desolation of an ancient battle-field is sadly deteriorated by a simple error regarding the natural habit of a well-known bird:

> The knot-grass fettered there the hand
> Which once could burst an iron band;
> Beneath the broad and ample bone,
> That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
> A feeble and a timorous guest,
> The fieldfare, framed her lowly nest.

The fieldfare is truly a timorous guest, but it is a winter one. It never frames a nest in this country; and if it did remain with us during the summer, it would, like all the rest of its tribe, build in a tree, and not on the ground. Milton, in his *Lycidas*, in verses of singular elegance, almost offends our sensibilities by enumerating as 'vernal flowers' many which are the production of summer and early autumn:

> Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
> Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
> On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
> Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
> That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
> And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
> Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
> The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
> The white-pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
> The glowing violet,
> The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
> The cowslip wan that hangs the pensive head,
> And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
> Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
> And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
> To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.

The sense of hearing in the mole is well known to be most exquisite, and Shakspeare ably alludes to the fact; but he is in error with respect to the animal being blind:

> Pray you, tread softly, that the blind mole may not
> Hear a footfall.

The mole has eyes, and though a limited power of vision might seem sufficient for such a 'dweller in the dark,' it can see better than is generally imagined. After all, we can scarcely blame the great poet for merely repeating a very common error of his period; while, on the other hand, he declares that crickets can hear—a fact which was denied by entomologists down almost to the present day:

> I will tell it softly, young crickets shall not hear me.

It was Brunelli, an Italian naturalist, who first proved that insects had a sense of hearing, by experimenting with crickets. He shut up several of these noisy, but not altogether unharmonious insects in an apartment where they would chirp all day, if he did not alarm them by knocking on the door; and at last he learned to imitate their chirp so well, that they regularly replied to him. Moreover, he confined a male cricket on one side of his garden, placing a female on the other, but at liberty; and as soon as the lady-cricket heard the merry chirp of her imprisoned beau, she made the best of her way to comfort and solace him.

It would be hypercritical to find fault with Shakspeare in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where he makes Titania tell her fairy attendants to be kind and courteous to Bottom, and to

> Feed him with apricoks and dewberries,
> With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
> The honey bags steal from the humble bees,
> And for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
> And light them at the fiery glowworm's eyes,
> To have my love to bed and to arise.

In reality, the light of the glowworm is not in the head, but at the opposite extremity of its body. But Moore is certainly open to censure where one of his angels talks of

> the light
> The glowworm hangs out to allure
> Her mate to her green bower at night.

For both the winged male, as well as wingless females, and even their larvæ, also possess the light; and the best entomologists admit that they cannot satisfactorily explain the cause or object of the singular phosphorescent phenomenon exhibited by this insect.

The paper nautilus, *Argonauta Argo*, has long been a favourite simile, and a sad stumbling-block among the poetic race:

> Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
> Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.

It is to Madame Jeannette Power, a French lady-naturalist, whose experiments and observations have received the highest praise from Professor Owen and other distinguished European *savans*, that we are indebted for the true history and nature of the argonaut. Keeping a quantity of these beautiful *cephalopods* in a large marine vivarium in Sicily, Madame Power was enabled to observe their habits with the greatest minuteness. The two velated dorsal arms, that the poets imagined to be sails, are in fact the covering of the shell, which they enclose like the mantle of the cowrie, and by their calcifying power, not only in the first instance form the shell, but afterwards keep it in repair. The so-called oars are not used when the animal is moving through the water, but protruded forwards from the head to be out of the way—the motion being in a backward direction, and produced, as in all the cuttle tribe, by the alternate expansion and contraction of the sac, and ejection of water through the siphon. A steam fishing-vessel, recently constructed at one of the Scotch ports, was propelled in a not very dissimilar manner.

A still more extraordinary wonder of the deep has been commemorated in poetry; Milton mentions that 'sea-beast'

Which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean flood.
Him haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,
Deeming some island oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side.

Yet we can scarcely blame Milton for alluding to this animal, the mythical kraken—

On the deep
Stretcht like a promontorie—

that had previously been described by Olaus Magnus and Bishop Pontoppidan. Gesner, too, the leading naturalist of the age, presents us with an engraving of it, in which the 'scaly rind' forms a prominent feature. Milton also qualifies his description with the words 'as seamen tell.' Undoubtedly, one of these seamen was Sinbad, the Arabian Ulysses, who, taking the animal for an island, landed to cook his dinner upon it, and in consequence nearly lost his life. The companions of St Brandanus, the Irish Sinbad, were taken in and done for in the very same manner by 'a great fish named Jasconye, which laboureth night and day to put his tail in his mouth, but for greatness he may not.'

Moore sings of an island, which, if more poetical than the one formed by the huge 'sea-beast slumbering on the Norway foam,' is quite as irreconcilable with common sense and the fixed laws of nature:

Oh, had we some bright little isle of our own,
In a blue summer ocean far off and alone,
Where a leaf never dies in the still blooming bowers,
And the bee banquets on through a whole year of flowers.

An island where a leaf never dies, and the flowers bloom all the year round, must be situated in the tropics, where there is almost no twilight, where the moment the sun sets, darkness covers the earth, and when it rises, day as suddenly succeeds to night. But Moore continues:

Where the sun loves to pause
With so fond a delay,
That the night only draws
A thin veil o'er the day.

These last lines accurately describe a summer night in the extreme northern islands of Scotland, or in Norway, where the slight depression of the sun beneath the horizon causes a short night, not of darkness, but of twilight. In fact, Moore, in the above lines, has combined two incompatible conditions—a perpetual summer and short night of twilight, the first found near the equator only, the last towards the pole.

Poets and moralists have in all times celebrated the industry and alleged foresight of the ant, upholding the tiny insect as a lesson and example to mankind. But although the diligence of the ant tribe is unquestionable, still it is well known now that the European ants at least do not lay up a store of food for the winter; nor do they require it, as they pass the cold weather in a state of torpidity. Still there can be no doubt that, in eastern climes, ants provide a store of provisions to last them over the rainy season, when they are unable to go abroad—just as several species of wasps in South America store honey, though their European representatives do not. In the *Transactions of the Entomological Society*, there is an interesting account of a tribe of ants, observed by Colonel Sykes, at Poonah, in India, which carefully dry and store up the seeds of a kind of grass (*panicum*), for no other imaginable purpose but for food. So the wise king was, morally and zoologically speaking, correct when he said: 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.'

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A CHAPTER OF EXPLANATIONS.

THE fight could not have lasted more than ten minutes. The whole skirmish had the semblance of a moonlight dream, interrupted by interludes of darkness. So rapid had been the movements of the forces engaged, that after the first fire, not a gun was reloaded. As for the guerrilleros, the Indian war-cry seemed to have shaken the pieces out of their hands, for the ground where they had first broken off was literally strewed with carbines, escopettes, and lances. The great gun of El Zorro was found among the spoils.

Notwithstanding the shortness of the affair, it proved sufficiently tragical to both Mexicans and Indians: five of the guerrilleros had bit the dust, and twice that number of savage warriors lay lifeless upon the plain—their bodies glaring under the red war-paint, as if shrouded in blood. The Mexicans lay near the foot of the mesa, having fallen under the first fire of the Rangers, delivered as they galloped up. The Indians were farther out upon the plain, where they had dropped to the thick rapid detonations of the revolvers, that, so long as the warriors held their ground, played upon them with fearful effect. They may have heard of this weapon, and perhaps have seen a revolver in the hands of some trapper or traveller, but, to my knowledge, it was the first time they had ever encountered a band of men armed with so terrible a power to destroy; for the Rangers were indeed the first military organisation that carried Colt's pistol into battle—the high cost of the arm having deterred the government from extending it to other branches of the service.

Nor did the Rangers themselves come unscathed out of the fight: two had dropped dead out of their saddles, pierced by the Comanche spear; while nearly a dozen were more or less severely wounded by arrows.

While Quackenboss was climbing the cliff, Garey and I found time to talk over the strange incidents to which we had been witness. We were aided by explanations from below, but, without these, we had no difficulty in comprehending all. The Indians were a band of Comanches, as their war-cry had already made known to us. Their arrival on the ground at that moment was purely accidental, so far as we or the Mexicans were concerned: it was a war-party, and upon the war-trail, with the intention of reiving a rich Mexican town on the other side of the Rio Grande, some twenty leagues from the rancheria. Their spy had discovered the horsemen by the mesa, and made them out to be Mexicans—a foe which the lordly Comanche holds in supreme contempt. Not so contemptible in his eyes are Mexican horses, silver-studded saddles, speckled serapés, mangas of fine cloth, bell-buttoned breeches, arms, and accoutrements; and it was to sweep this paraphernalia that the attack had been made; though hereditary hatred of the Spanish race—old as the Conquest—and revenge for more recent wrongs, were of themselves sufficient motives to have impelled the Indians to their hostile attempt. All this we learned from one of their braves, who remained wounded upon the ground, and who, upon closer examination, turned out to be a *ci-devant* Mexican captive, now completely Indianised!

Fortunately for the Mexican town, the savages, thus checked, abandoned their design, and returned to their mountain fastnesses sadly humbled.

The rest of the affair was still of easier explanation to Garey and myself. Rube, as we conjectured, had arrived safe at the rancheria; and in ten minutes after his story had been told, fifty Rangers, with Holingsworth at their head, rode rapidly for the mesa. Rube had guided them with his usual craft. Like the Indians, they had been moving forward during the intervals of darkness; but, coming in the opposite direction, they had kept the mound between them and their foe, and, trusting to this advantage, were in hopes of taking the guerrilleros by surprise. They had approached almost within charging distance, when the war-whoop of the savage sounded in their ears, and they were met by the retreating band. Knowing that all who came that way must be enemies, they delivered their fire upon the approaching horsemen, and then galloping forward, found themselves face to face with the painted warriors of the plains. The mutual surprise of Rangers and Indians, caused by the unexpected rencontre, proved a happy circumstance for the cowardly guerrilla, who, during the short halt of their double pursuers, and the confused fight that followed, were enabled to gallop off beyond reach of pursuit.

It was a curious conjecture what would have been the result had the Rangers not arrived on the ground. Certainly the Indians would have rescued us from our not less savage foes. My companion and I might have remained undiscovered, but we should have lost our precious horses. As it was, we were soon once more upon their backs; and, free from all thought of peril, now joyfully turned our faces towards the rancheria.

Wheatley rode by my side. Holingsworth with a party remained upon the ground to collect the 'spoils' and bury our unfortunate comrades. As we moved away, I turned, and for a moment gazed back on the scene of strife. I saw Holingsworth dismounted on the plain. He was moving among the bodies of the five guerrilleros; one after another, he turned them over, till the moon glared upon their ghastly features. So odd were his movements, and so earnest did he appear, that one might have fancied him engaged in searching for a fallen friend, or more like some prowling robber intent upon stripping the dead! But neither object was his—on the contrary, he was searching for a foe. He found him not. After scanning the features of all five, he was seen to turn away, and the unconcerned manner in which he moved from the spot, told that he who was sought was not among the slain.

'The news, Wheatley?'

'News, Cap! Grand news, by thunder! It appears we have been barking up the wrong tree—at least so thinks President Polk. They say we can't reach Mexico on this line; so we're all going to be drawn off, and shipped to some port further down the gulf—Vera Cruz, I believe.'

'Ah! grand news indeed.'

'I don't like it a bit,' continued Wheatley; 'the less so since it is rumoured that old "Rough and Ready" is to be recalled, and we're to be commanded by that book martinet Scott. It's shabby treatment of Taylor, after what the old vet has accomplished. They're afraid of him setting up for president next go. Hang their politics! It's a confounded shame, by thunder!'

I could partly understand Wheatley's reluctance to be ordered upon the new line of operations. The gay lieutenant was never troubled with ennui; his leisure hours he contrived to pass pleasantly enough in company with Conchita, the plump, dark-eyed daughter of the alcaldé; more than once, I had unwittingly interrupted them in their amorous dalliance. The rancheria with its mud huts and dusty lanes, in the eyes of the Texan, was a city of gilded palaces, its streets paved with gold. It was Wheatley's heaven, and Conchita was the angel who inhabited it. Little as either he or I had liked the post at first, neither of us desired a change of quarters.

As yet, no order had arrived to call the picket in, but my companion affirmed that the camp-rumour was a substantial one, and believed that we might expect such a command at any moment.

'What say they of me?' I inquired.

'Of you, Cap? Why, nothing. What do you expect them to say of you?'

'Surely there has been some talk about my absence?'

'Oh, that! No, not a word, at least at head-quarters, for the simple reason, that you're not yet reported missing.'

'Ah! that is good news; but how'——

'Why, the truth is, Holingsworth and I thought we might serve you better by keeping the thing dark—at all events, till we should be sure you were dead lost. We hadn't given up all hope. The greaser who guided you out, brought back word that two trappers had gone after you. From his description, I knew that queer old case Rube, and was satisfied that if anything remained of you, he was the man to find it.'

'Thanks, my friend! you have acted well; your discreet conduct will save me a world of mortification.

'No other news?' I inquired after a pause.

'No,' said Wheatley; 'none worth telling. O yes!' he continued, suddenly recollecting himself, 'there is a bit. You remember those hang-dog greasers that used to loaf about the village when we first came? Well, they're gone, by thunder! every mother's son of them clean *vamosed* from the place, and not a grease-spot left of them. You may walk through the whole settlement without seeing a Mexican, except the old men and the women. I asked the alcaldé where they had cleared to; but the old chap only shook his head, and drawled out his eternal "Quien sabe?" Of course they're off to join some band of guerrillas. By thunder! when I think of it, I wouldn't wonder if they were among that lot we've just scattered. Sure as shootin, they are! I saw Holingsworth examine the five dead ones as we rode off. He'll know them, I guess, and can tell us if any of our old acquaintances are among them.'

Knowing more of this matter than Wheatley himself, I enlightened him as to the guerrilleros and their leader.

'Thought so, by thunder! Rafael Ijurra! No wonder Holingsworth was so keen to start—in such a hurry to reach the mound, he forgot to tell me who we were after. Deuce take it! what fools we've been to let these fellows slide. We should have strung up every man of them when we first reached the place—we should, by thunder!'

For some minutes, we rode on in silence. Twenty times a question was upon my lips, but I refrained from putting it, in hopes that Wheatley might have something more to tell me—something of more interest than aught he had yet communicated. He remained provokingly silent.

With the design of drawing him out, I assumed a careless air, and inquired:

'Have we had no visitors at the post? Any one from the camp?'

'Not a soul,' replied he, and again relapsed into meditative silence.

'No visitors whatever? Has no one inquired for *me*?' I asked, determined to come boldly to the point.

'No,' was the discouraging reply.—'Oh, stay: oh, ah—yes, indeed!' he added, correcting himself, while I could perceive that he spoke in a peculiar tone. 'Yes, you *were* inquired for.'

'By whom?' asked I, in a careless drawl.

'Well, that I can't tell,' answered the lieutenant, in an evident tone of badinage; 'but there appears to be *somebody* mighty uneasy about you. A slip of a Mexican boy has been backward and forward something less than a million of times. It's plain somebody sends the boy; but he's a close little shaver that same—won't tell either who sends him, or what's his business: he only inquires if you have returned, and looks dead down in the mouth when he's told no. I have noticed that he comes and goes on the *road that leads to the hacienda*.'

The last words were spoken with a distinct emphasis. 'We might have arrested the little fellow as a spy,' continued Wheatley, in a tone of quiet irony, 'but we fancied he might have been sent by some friend of yours.'

The speaker concluded with another marked emphasis, and under the moonlight I could see a smile playing across his features. More than once I had 'chaffed' my lieutenant about Conchita; he was having his revenge.

I was not in a mood to take offence; my companion could have taken any liberty with me at that moment—his communication had fallen like sweet music upon my ears, and I rode forward with the proud consciousness that I was not forgotten. Isolina was true.

Soon after, my eyes rested upon a shining object; it was the gilded vane of the little capilla, and beneath glistened the white walls of the hacienda, bathed in the milky light of the moon. My heart beat with strange emotions as I gazed upon the well-known mansion, and thought of the lovely jewel which that bright casket contained. Was she asleep? Did she dream? Of what—of whom, was she dreaming?

CHAPTER XLIV.

DUTCH LIGE IN A DIFFICULTY.

The soft blue light of morning was just perceptible along the eastern horizon as we rode into the rancheria. I no longer felt hunger. Some of the more provident of the rangers had brought with them well-filled haversacks, and had made me welcome to the contents. From their canteens I had satisfied my thirst, and Wheatley as usual carried his free flask.

Relieved of the protracted strain upon my nerves—of fear and vigil—I felt deadly weary, and, scarcely undressing, I flung myself upon my leathern *catré*, and at once fell asleep.

A few hours' repose had the desired effect, and restored both the strength of my body and the vigour of my mind. I awoke full of health and hope. A world of sweet anticipations was before me. The sky and fortune were both smiling.

I made my toilet with some care—my *desayuna* with less—and then, with lighted cigar, ascended to my favourite lounge on the azotea.

The beautiful captive was in the midst of a crowd, proudly curving his neck, as if conscious of the admiration he excited. The rangers, the poblanas, the hucksters of the plazza, even some sulky leperos stood near, gazing with wondering eyes upon the wild-horse.

'Splendid present!' thought I—'worthy the acceptance of a princess!'

It had been my intention to make the offering in person—hence the care bestowed upon my toilet. After more mature reflection, I abandoned this design. I was influenced by a variety of considerations—one, among others, being a delicate apprehension that a personal visit from me might compromise the family at the hacienda. The *patriotic* sentiment was every day growing more intense. Even the acceptance of a present was a dangerous matter; but the steed was not to be a gift—only a return for the favourite that had fallen by my hand—and I was not to appear in the character of a donor.

My sable groom, therefore, would convey the beautiful captive. Already the white lazo, formed into a halter, was adjusted around the animal's head, and the negro only awaited orders to lead him away.

I confess that at that moment I felt somewhat annoyed at the publicity *of* my affair. My rough rangers were men of keen intelligence. I could tell from some whispers that had reached me, that one and all of them knew *why* I had gone upon the wild hunt, and I dreaded their good-humoured satire. I would have given something at that moment to have rendered the steed invisible—to have been able to transport him to his destination, Venus-like, under cover of a cloud. I thought of waiting for the friendly shelter of night.

Just then, however, an incident occurred which gave me the very opportunity I wanted—a scene so ludicrous, that the steed was no longer the cynosure of admiring eyes. The hero of this scene was Elijah Quackenboss.

Of all the men in my band, 'Dutch Lige' was the worst clad. Not that there was less money expended upon his outward man; but partly from his ungainly form and loose untidy habits, and more, perhaps, from the wear and tear caused by his botanising excursions, a suit of broadcloth did not keep sound upon him for a week. He was habitually in tatters.

The skirmish of the night had been profitable to Lige; it was his true aim that had brought down one of the five guerrilleros. On his asserting this, his comrades had laughed at it as an idle vaunt; but Quackenboss proved his assertion to be correct by picking his bullet out of the man's body, and holding it up before their eyes. The peculiar 'bore' of his rifle rendered the bullet easy of identification, and all agreed that Lige had shot his man.

By the laws of ranger-war, the spoils of this particular individual became the property of Quackenboss; and the result was, that he had shaken off his tattered rags, and now appeared in the plazza in full Mexican costume—comprising calzoneros and calzoncillos, sash and serapé, jacket and glazed hat, botas with gigantic spurs—in short, a complete set of ranchero habiliments!

Never was such a pair of legs incased in Mexican velveteens—never were two such arms thrust into the sleeves of an embroidered *jaqueta;* and so odd was the *tout ensemble* of the ranger thus attired, that his appearance in the plazza was hailed by a loud burst of laughter, both from his comrades and the natives who stood around. Even the gloomy Indians shewed their white teeth, and joined in the general chorus.

But this was not the end. Among other spoils, Lige had made capture of a Comanche mustang; and as his own war-horse had been for a long time on the decline, this afforded him an excellent opportunity for a remount. Some duty of the day had called him forth, and he now appeared in the plazza leading the mustang, to which he had transferred his own saddle and bridle. A fine handsome horse it appeared. More than one of his comrades envied him this splendid prize.

The laughter had scarcely subsided, when the order was given to mount; and with others, Quackenboss sprang to his horse. But his hips were hardly snug in the saddle, when the wicked Comanche 'humped' his back and entered upon a round of kicking which seemed to exhibit every pose and attitude of equestrian exercise. First his hind-feet, then his fore ones, then all together, could be seen glancing in the air. Now a hoof whizzed past the ear of the affrighted rider, now a set of teeth threatened his thighs, while every moment he appeared in danger of being hurled with violence to the earth. The sombrero had long since parted from his head, and the rifle from his hand; and what with the flapping of the wide trousers, the waving of the loose serapé, the dancing of the steel scabbard, the distracted motion of the rider's arms, his lank streaming hair and look of terror—all combined to form a spectacle sufficiently ludicrous; and the whole crowd was convulsed with laughter, and the plazza rang with shouts of 'Bravo!' 'Well done, Lige!' 'Hooraw for you, old beeswax!'

But what surprised his comrades, was the fact that Quackenboss still kept his seat. It was well known that he was the worst rider in the troop; yet despite all the doubling and flinging of the mustang, that had now lasted for several minutes, he was still safe in the saddle. He was winning golden opinions upon the strength of his splendid horsemanship! The rangers were being astonished.

All at once, however, this mystery was explained, and the cause of his firm seat discovered. One of the bystanders, sharper than the rest, had chanced to look under the belly of the mustang, and the next moment shouted out:

'Hoy! look yonder! by Geehorum, *his spurs are clinched!*'

All eyes were lowered, and a fresh peal of laughter broke forth from the crowd as they perceived that this was in reality the case.

Lige, upon mounting—under the suspicion that the mustang was disposed for a fling—had clutched firmly with his legs, and these, on account of their extreme length, completely enveloped the body of the animal, so that his heels met underneath. He had forgotten his new spurs, the rowels of which, six inches in diameter, irritated the mustang, and were no doubt the cause of such violent kicking. These, after a few turns, had got 'locked,' and of course held Quackenboss as firmly as if he had been strapped to the saddle. But as the rowels were now buried in the ribs of the mustang, the fierce brute, maddened with the pain, only grew more furious at each fling, and it was natural enough he should do his utmost to rid himself of so cruel a rider.

How long he might have kept up the pitching frolic before his involuntary tormentor could have freed himself, is a matter of conjecture. It would have been an unfortunate 'fix' to have been placed in, alone upon the prairies.

Lige, however, found a compassionate bystander, who, having flung his lazo around the neck of the mustang, brought the spectacle to a termination.

CHAPTER XLV.

A LOVER ON THE TRAIL.

Taking advantage of the distraction caused by Quackenboss and his troubles, I despatched the black upon his interesting errand, and with no slight anxiety awaited the result.

From my position on the roof, I saw my messenger climb the hill, leading the proud steed, and saw them enter the great portal of the hacienda.

Promptly—almost directly—the groom came out again *without* the horse. The present had been accepted. So far well.

I counted the moments, till heavy footsteps were heard upon the escalera, and a shining black face rose over the roof.

There was no letter, no message beyond '*mil gracias.*'

I felt a pang of chagrin. I had expected thanks more formal than this mere phrase of compliment.

My man appeared better satisfied. A gold *onza* gleamed in his purple palm—a handsome perquisite.

'By whom given?' I inquired.

'Golly, mass cap'n! De handsomest quaderoom gal dis nigga ever see guv it.'

Beyond a doubt, Isolina herself was the donor! I could have broken the rascal's thick skull but that the queenly douceur gave proof of the satisfaction with which my offering had been received. Even on this trivial circumstance, I built my hopes of yet receiving a fuller meed of thanks.

Absorbed in these hopes, I continued to pace the azotea alone. It was a *dia de fiesta* in the rancheria. Bells had already commenced their clangour, and other notes of preparation fell upon the ear. The poblanus appeared in their gayest attire—the Indians in bright naguas, with red and purple threads twisted in their black hair; the denizens of the ranchitos were pouring into the plazza, and processions were being formed by the church; *jaranas* were twanging their guitar-like music; and pyrotechnic machines were set up at the corners of the streets. Tinsel-covered saints were carried about on the shoulders of painted maskers; and there were Pilate and the Centurion, and the Saviour—a spectacle absurd and unnatural; and yet a spectacle that may be witnessed every week in a Mexican village, and which, with but slight variation, has been exhibited every week for three centuries!

I had no eyes for this disgusting fanfaronade of a degrading superstition. Sick of the sight, wearied with the sounds, I had given orders for my horse to be saddled, intending to ride forth and seek repose for my spirit amid the silent glades of the chapparal.

While waiting for my steed, an object came under my eyes that quickened the beatings of my pulse: my gaze had been long turned in one direction—upon the hacienda of Don Ramon de Vargas.

Just then, I saw emerging from its gate, and passing rapidly down the hill, a horse with a rider upon his back.

The snow-white colour of this horse, and the scarlet manga of the rider, both contrasting with the green of the surrounding landscape, could not escape observation even at that distance, and my eyes at once caught the bright object. I hesitated not to form my conclusion. It was the white steed I saw; and the rider—I remembered the manga as when first my eyes rested upon that fair form—the rider was Isolina. She was passing down the slope that stretched from the hacienda to the river bottom, and the minute after, the thick foliage of the platanus trees shrouded the shining meteor from my sight.

I noticed that she halted a moment on the edge of the woods, and fancied that she gazed earnestly towards the village; but the road she had taken led almost in the opposite direction.

I chafed with impatience for my horse. My resolve, made on the impulse of the moment, was to follow the white steed and his scarlet-clad rider.

Once in the saddle, I hurried out of the plazza, passed the ranchos of yucca, and reaching the open country, pressed my horse into a gallop.

My road lay up the river, through a heavily timbered bottom of gum and cotton woods. These were thickly beset with the curious *tillandsia*, whose silvery festoons, stretching from branch to branch, shrouded the sun, causing amongst the tree-trunks the obscurity of twilight.

In the midst of one of these shadowy aisles, I met or passed some one; I saw that it was a Mexican boy; but the sombre light, and the rapidity with which I was riding, prevented me from noting anything more. The lad shouted after me, uttering some words, which were drowned by the hoof-strokes of my horse. I deemed it some expression of boyish *esprit*, and, without heeding it, rode on. Not until far out of sight and hearing did it occur to me that I knew the voice and the lad. I recollected a sort of errand-boy attached to the hacienda, and whom I had seen more than once at the rancheria. I now remembered the badinage of Wheatley, and would have returned to question the youth; but I had left him too far in the rear. After a moment's reflection, I spurred on.

I soon arrived at the base of the hill on which stood the hacienda; and here, leaving the main road, I followed a bridle-path that skirted the hill. A few hundred yards brought me to the spot where I had last observed the object of my pursuit. The hoof-track of the white horse now guided me, and upon his trail I entered the woods.

For some distance, it followed a well-trodden path—a cattle track—but all at once it diverged from this, and struck off into a heavily timbered bottom, where not the semblance of path existed. Keeping the trace in view, I rode after.

As I advanced, the timber grew thicker, and the path more difficult. A close underwood of arundinaria and sabal palms shut up the way and the view; trailing roots obstructed progress below; while higher up, the trellis-work of llianas, bamboo briars, sarsaparilla, and gigantic grape-vines, rendered it necessary to bend down in the saddle in order to pass onward.

To my surprise, I noticed all this. For what purpose could she have chosen such a path? Was it indeed Isolina I had seen? A white horse and a scarlet manga are not uncommon things in Mexico. It might not be—— But the hoof-print——

I dismounted and examined it: I knew it at a glance—it was that of the noble steed, and the rider could be no other than Isolina de Vargas.

No longer in doubt, though still wondering, I followed the tracks. For a half mile or more, the path meandered through thick forest, here turning around some giant trunk, there diverging to the right or left, to avoid the impervious net-work of canes and llianas.

At length it began to slope upwards; and I perceived by the ascent that I was climbing a hill. The woods became more open as I advanced—here and there alternating with glades—the trees were of slenderer growth, and the foliage lighter and thinner. I was no longer among the heavy trunks of platanus and liquidambar. The *leguminoseæ* were the prevailing trees; and many beautiful forms of inga, acacia, and mimosa, grew around. Myrtles, too, mingled their foliage with wild limes, their branches twined with flowering parasites, as the climbing *combretum*, with its long flame-like clusters, convolvuli, with large white blossoms, and the beautiful twin-leaved bauhinia.

It was a wild garden of flowers—a shrubbery of nature's own planting. The eye, wandering through the vistas and glades, beheld almost every form of infloresence. There were the trumpet-shaped bignonias—convolvuli in pendulous bells—syngenesists disposed in spreading umbels; and over them, closely set upon tall spikes, rose the showy blossoms of the bromelias—aloes and *dasylyrium*. Even from the tops of the highest trees hung gaudy catkins, wafted to and fro by the light breeze, mingling their sheen and their perfume with the floral *epiphytes* and parasites that clustered around the branches.

I could not help thinking that these flowers are gifted with life, and enjoy, during their short and transient existence, both pleasure and pain. The bright warm sun is their happiness, while the cold cloudy sky is the reflection of their misery.

As I rode onward, another reflection passed through my mind; it was caused by my perceiving that the atmosphere was charged with pleasant perfumes—literally loaded with fragrance. I perceived, moreover, that the same breeze carried upon its breath the sweet music of birds, whose notes sounded clear, soft, and harmonious.

What closet-slanderer hath asserted that the flowers of this fair land are devoid of fragrance—that its birds, though brightly plumed, are songless?

Ah, Monsieur Buffon! with all your eloquence, such presumptive assertion will one day strip you of half your fame. You could never have approached within two hundred paces of a *Stanhopea*, of the *epidendum odoratum*, of the *datura grandiflora*, with its mantle of snow-white blossoms? You could never have passed near the pothos plant, the serbereæ, and tabernamon taneæ, the callas, eugenias, ocotas, and nictiginas?—you could never have ridden through a chapparal of acacias and mimosas—among orchids whose presence fills whole forests with fragrant aroma?

And more, Monsieur! you could never have listened to the incomparable melody of the mock-bird—the full, charming notes of the blue song-thrush—the sweet warbling voices of the silvias, finches, and tanagers, that not only adorn the American woods with their gorgeous colours, but make them vocal with never-ending song?

No, Monsieur; you could never have inhaled the perfume of these flowers, nor listed to the melody of these sweet songsters; and sad it was of you, and silly as sad, to have yielded to the prejudice of a slender spirit, and denied their existence. Both exist—the singing birds and the fragrant flowers—both exist, and thou art gone.

On such reflections I dwelt but for a moment; they were merely the natural impressions of surrounding objects—short-lived sensations, almost instantaneously passing away. The soul, benighted with love, has neither eye nor ear for aught beyond the object of its passion. From the contemplation of that only does it derive pleasure; and even the fairest pictures of nature may be spread before it without challenging observation. It was only that the one through which I was passing was of such transcendent beauty—so like to some scene of paradise—that I could not help regarding it with momentary admiration.

But my eyes soon returned to the earth, and once more taking up the trace of the steed, I rode on.

I had advanced near the summit. The tracks were quite recent; the branches that had been touched by the flanks of the horse had not yet ceased to vibrate; the rider could not be far in advance. I fancied I heard the hoof-stroke.

Silently I pressed on, expecting every moment to catch the gleam of the scarlet manga, or the white sheen of the steed. A few paces farther, and both were under my eyes, glittering through the feathery frondage of the mimosas. I had followed the true track. The rider was Isolina.

I saw that she had halted. She had reached the top of the hill, where the growth of timber ceased. An opening of about an acre there was, surrounded on all sides by the flowery woods—the very *beau-idéal* of a summer glade. The open summit commanded a view of the surrounding country—for the hill was a high one—while the charming spot itself enjoyed perfect privacy and repose.

In this glade, she had drawn up, and was sitting silently in the saddle as if to enjoy the warbling of birds, the hum of the bees, and the fragrance of flowers.

I myself drew rein, and remained for some moments in a state of hesitancy, as to whether I should ride forward or go back. A feeling of shame was upon me, and I believe I would have turned my horse and stolen gently away, but just then I saw the fair rider draw forth from her bosom something that glittered in the sun. It was a watch, and she appeared to note the time. I observed that she looked anxiously over the tops of the low trees, in the direction of the plain below.

These circumstances, trivial as they might appear, produced within me a quick sense of pain. I felt as if hot steel was passing through my heart. I had ridden to my ruin—I had followed to be present at an assignation. Thus only could I explain the solitary ride, and by such difficult and devious paths; thus only could I account for the oft-repeated anxious glance, the ear acutely bent. Beyond a doubt, she was listening for the footsteps of a lover!

The rein fell from my fingers. I sat irresolute—I scarcely breathed—my heart felt cold and feeble—the birds mocked me—the parrots screeched his name—the *aras* in hoarse concert cried out '*Ijurra!*'

The name nerved me, as blood knits the sinews of the tiger. Once more my fingers closed upon my bridle, my feet became firm in the stirrups, and heart and arm swelled to their full strength. 'Twas but a light rapier that hung against my thigh—no matter; he might be no better weaponed; but even armed from head to heel, I feared him not. Three passions—hatred, jealousy, and revenge—supplied an arm of treble strength, and under the influence of these I felt bold and sure of conquest. Yes! I felt at that moment, as though I could have slain my hated rival with my naked hands.

I was no longer troubled with scruples of etiquette. No; this monster owed me satisfaction—life itself: he had striven to take mine; and now his should be forfeit to my vengeance. On that spot—even in her presence—should he die, or I myself become the victim. The two of us should never go thence alive. 'Oh, that he may reach the ground while my blood is thus hot, and my hand ready!'

The fierce thoughts stirring within me must have roused my horse, for at that moment he tossed his head and neighed wildly. A response came like an echo from the glade, and the instant after, a voice called out:

'*Hola! quien va?*'

Concealment was no longer possible. I saw that I was observed; and, spurring my horse into the open ground, came face to face with Isolina.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the reduction and economy which, to the satisfaction of the nation, are now the order of the day, the government does not intend that science shall relapse into the same inefficient state in which it was found at the outbreak of the war with Russia. The Woolwich Committee, whose appointment for scientific purposes we noticed a year ago, is to be continued; the experiments with projectiles at Shoeburyness and other places are to be kept up with unrelaxed attention, though at less cost than heretofore. Less satisfactory to many is the announcement, that the idea of another expedition to make one more search for the long-lost Franklin party, is abandoned. The embarrassing question, who shall seek the seekers? becomes, with every new proposal, more weighty. Private enterprise is now the only resource of those who hold another search to be an indispensable duty.

That our consuls abroad ought to know something more than the mere routine of their duties, is a growing conviction. So much comes under their notice, in which scientific knowledge would be of essential service, and so much is and has been lost for want of this knowledge, that an improvement in consular appointments may be looked for. The king of Siam, well-known in Europe for his love and patronage of science, wishes to have a British consul resident at his capital, and asks for a scientific man—one who may be able to do something in developing the resources of the country, and in giving a sound practical direction to its enterprise. Sir Robert Schomburgk—at present our consul in San Domingo, where he finds too little to do, has been thought of for the post near his Siamese majesty; and he is said, not without reason, to be the very man for the place.—Mr Newton, consul at Cos, in his studious explorations of the island, discovered last year an ancient, long-buried city, and sent home such representations as induced the Admiralty to send out the *Gorgon*, with materials and appliances for excavation. We have not yet heard the result.—The consul in Anatolia reports that great portion of the English sovereigns which flowed into that province during the war has been spent in cultivation. The country is fertile, producing abundance of corn and much cattle, and only wants good roads for further development; and these roads—seeing that British enterprise is now directed to Turkey—it is likely to have in good time. The produce of silk last year amounted to the value of L.400,000—a noteworthy fact, considering the enhanced price which silk has of late fetched in the market—and new spinning establishments, with improved reeling machinery, have been erected in the neighbourhood of Broussa. The Anatolian worms did not suffer from the malady which for some years past has well-nigh destroyed those of Europe, and numbers of their eggs have been sent to renew the weakened stocks of France and Italy.

Talking of able consuls reminds us of the *Blue-book* just published, containing a report on the examinations for the Civil Service. It appears that the whole number of candidates from May 1855 to December 1856, was 3004. Of these, 880 were rejected, 219 broke down under the examination, and a few others were too old, or unable to produce satisfactory evidence as to character. The commissioners think that, on the whole, the results are encouraging, notwithstanding the lamentable ignorance exhibited by many of the candidates. The blunders made in answering the simplest questions in history, and the wild mistakes in spelling would be ludicrous, did they not set one thinking as to what must have been the miserable incapacity of those who, but a very few years ago, obtained appointments before examinations were in fashion. Young men surely know whether they can spell well or not; and those who cannot, should at least make themselves perfect in orthography before they seek to enter the public service.

The amount of exports from the United Kingdom for 1856, is little less than wonderful—L.115,890,857, being L.20,202,772 more than in 1855.—The preliminaries for the great Euphrates Railway are growing more and more into a working form. An excellent sheltered bay for a harbour has been found near the mouth of the Orontes, in which a port and terminus are to be built. From thence the line will run to Killis, a town of 11,000 inhabitants—and onwards to Antioch and Aleppo. The latter, as is well known, is an important trading city, and we hear that its inhabitants petitioned to have the railway close to them. From Aleppo, the line will stretch parallel with the Euphrates to Ja' Ber castle, where it is proposed that the first section shall end, and from thence to Buzrah (the Bassora of the *Arabian Nights*), a name with which Mr Layard has made us all familiar. Here will be the starting-point of a branch to the capital of Persia, while the main line will continue across Beloochistan and to India by way of Hyderabad and the Deccan. It will be a triumph of enterprise when passengers can get into a train on the shore of the Mediterranean, and travel without a change of trains 3000 or 4000 miles to Calcutta. Whatever be the result of our negotiations with Persia, it is thought that we shall keep Bushire for the sake of permanent protection to the Gulf terminus of the railway.—There is talk, too, of a new railway in India, from Rajmahal to Darjeeling, some 300 miles, whereby an important section of the country will be opened up, and invalids will be able to travel quickly from the hot plains to the temperate climate of the hills.—And there is a scheme for a telegraph to India, to start from Cape Helle, across the Mediterranean, to Scio, Rhodes, and Alexandria, and follow the railway to Suez. From thence, a submarine cable to be laid in lengths of about 500 miles to Kurrachee, the several lengths to terminate at stations along the coast, so as to obviate the expense and difficulty of repair, &c., of one long continuous line.—France is about to try what can be done in Algeria, Louis Napoleon having authorised Sir Morton Peto to survey for a hundred miles of railway, to commence at Constantine. Will this prove the beginning of a line which some day will reach to Timbuctoo, and the fertile regions of middle Africa discovered by Dr Livingstone?

Sir Henry Ward, governor of Ceylon, has visited certain remarkable ancient tanks still existing in that remarkable island. The workmanship, 1800 years old, is described as admirable. The Kandelly tank has an area of fifteen square miles in the wet season, and never less than three miles in the driest; but, from long neglect, it is in great part little better than a swamp. As the country all around is extremely fertile and lovely withal, a proposition has been made to colonise it, in which event the great tank would be restored to its original purpose of irrigation.—Slumbering Java is waking up: a telegraph is constructed from Batavia to Buitenzorg, and is to be extended to other places.—Australia is not asleep, for the colonists have now discovered that certain large patches of what they call 'black sand,' yield a better profit than gold. It consists chiefly of tin, with scattered grains of platinum, and lying on the surface, exacts no severe digging.—Another Australian topic is, that the settlers towards the interior have succeeded in some places in damming up the water of floods, and so keeping a supply for the dry season; and that where the waters have been thus retained, there has been a sensible diminution of heat, and in the violence of the scorching winds known on the spot as 'brickfielders.'

To glance at home matters: Professor Faraday has given a lecture at the Royal Institution on a deeply abstruse subject, including the phenomena of force and attraction, in which he puts forth explicitly certain views long entertained by him, and not unfrequently hinted at in his lectures. Some of these views are in direct opposition to those generally held by natural philosophers, and notably to the doctrine that 'attraction is inversely as the square of the distance.' As chroniclers of the progress of science, we content ourselves with recording the fact, leaving to a future opportunity a detailed exposition of it in a popular form.—A paper on the *Photography of the Moon*, by Mr Crookes, read before the Royal Society, makes another step towards the knowledge of the physical constitution of our satellite.—An important question, 'On the Various Methods of Indurating and Preserving Stonework,' has been considered and discussed by the Institute of British Architects, and with the effect of bringing out interesting and important facts. From these we learn that, however good may be the quality of building-stone, it is not proof against the destructive action of a London atmosphere. There are about 350,000 houses in the great metropolis, and from the chimneys of this vast number is sent forth a sulphurous acid gas, which, brought down by rain, produces most fatal results. The decay that has already taken place on the surface of Buckingham Palace, Bridgewater House, the Houses of Parliament, to say nothing of St Paul's and older buildings, would surprise those who have paid no attention to the subject. Among means of preservation, oily coatings and paint were shewn to be objectionable, though better than nothing, except in certain special preparations. Silicate of soda, as applied at Munich and Paris—as mentioned in a former *Month*—is one of the best preservatives. Another is, to cover this silicate with a coat of chloride of barium or calcium in solution, by which an insoluble silicate of baryta or lime is deposited in the pores of the stone. Gas-tar dropped accidentally on Caen stone led to the discovery of a process of hardening, which is carried on at Tonbridge Wells on a large scale. Blocks of soft sandstone, of any dimensions, are worked to the required form, and in a few hours are rendered 'quite impervious to destructive weathering influence, also exceedingly hard and compact, susceptible of a brilliant transparent polish, and of every desired colour.' Mr J. B. Daines said, that by subjecting one part (by weight) of sulphur and eight parts of linseed oil to a temperature between 226 and 278 degrees, he obtained a species of paint of singularly preservative properties. Applied to the surface of a building with a brush, it effectually keeps out air and moisture, prevents deposits of soot and dirt, preserves the beauty of the appearance of the stone, and once applied, does not need to be repeated. 'All chemists agree that sulphur, the substance used to give body to the linseed oil, is unalterable in the air, and unacted on by moisture; if there is any change, it rather improves the colour of the stone to which it is applied, as is shewn by the experiments in Old Palace Yard, adjoining Victoria Tower, the statue of Captain Coram at the Foundling Hospital, and other places.'—Another solution, described by Mr Page, is potash and lime, over which a coating of bees'-wax, softened by turpentine or naphtha, is to be applied. It has been tried on more than 400 works in the midland counties and at Liverpool, and with the result of shewing that walls with only one coat are as well preserved as those with a dozen. Part of a monument in Bilston churchyard, treated with this solution, has withstood the effects of a smoky atmosphere for seventeen years, while the parts left uncoated are 'in a state of rottenness, and falling away in every direction.'

Another subject brought before the Institute is that of metropolitan improvements. It is proposed to open a new street from Leicester Square, and from Tottenham Court Road, to Covent Garden and the Strand. This is a much needed improvement; and we hear that the Duke of Bedford has offered L.15,000 towards carrying it out. Should the houses be built of stone, all the best hardening processes may be tried thereon. Another scheme is for an open road or quay along the south side of the river, and for a new street to connect the London Bridge termini with Westminster Bridge. It might help towards a satisfactory decision to refer to Mr Pennethorne's plan, published in 1844, 'for a line direct from Westminster Bridge to St George's Church in the Borough, and on through Bermondsey, which would then be opened up to general traffic.'

Among papers brought before the Institution of Civil Engineers, there are two worth a passing mention: 'On Varieties of Permanent Way,' and 'On Some Recent Improvements in Permanent Way.' In the reading of these, it was shewn that 'wooden keys' are superior as fastenings to iron nuts and screws. The wood is elastic, and brings larger surfaces into contact. 'A recent examination,' says the report, 'of some brackets and fish-plates, which had been laid down about twelve months, and were secured by bolts and nuts, shewed that in 125 pair of joints, each pair having eight bolts, 261 bolts were loose, and six were out altogether, although they had been tightened up within forty-eight hours.' Cast-iron sleepers are preferable in all respects to wood; and certain engineers consider it remarkable, 'that a country abounding in iron should annually expend hundreds of thousands of pounds in bringing timber from foreign countries, to lie and rot on the railways.' Many improvements are now in course of trial, and others are shewn to be at hand. —We may add to these observations on our own railways, that at the end of 1856, the extent of railway in the United States was 24,470 miles.

Dr Duchesne states, in a communication to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, that the engineers and stokers on a railway improve in health and grow stout during their first year or two of employment; but that afterwards a fatal change takes place. Among the earliest unfavourable symptoms are, a weakening of sight, loss of hearing, rheumatic pains, chiefly in the right side, and a general sensation of numbness. These are followed by pain and difficulty in standing, owing to the violent tremor of the locomotive when in motion, which makes it difficult to maintain an erect posture.

Some remarkable facts come out of the French census for 1856, contrasting forcibly with the results of the English census in 1851, or last year's *Report* of the Registrar-general. There had been, it appears, no real increase of the population since 1851; and there was a marked and constant influx of people from the country into towns, chiefly into Paris. Taking the years 1841 to 1846, the increase of population was 1,200,000; from 1851 to 1856, it was only 256,000, and this disappears in the sum-total when the mortality is taken into consideration. From 1846 to 1851, the increase was 380,000: the decline is thus seen to be progressive: and by the side of this we find the numbers in the department of the Seine increased by 300,000 in the past five years, in consequence of the migrations from the provinces to the capital. Fifty-four departments shew a decrease: one, the Haute Saône, has lost one-tenth of its population, and others in nearly the same proportion. Grave matter here for professors of economical and social science to consider over.

M. Lallement, surgeon-dentist of Paris, has discovered a simple means of making an elastic and imputrescible gelatine. He mixes glycerine in equal proportions by weight with strong glue melted in a water-bath. Properly prepared, it serves admirably for printers' rollers, for stamps, elastic toys, models for galvanoplasty, or for anatomical figures, artificial limbs, and so forth, to which the colour and suppleness of the muscles and tendons may readily be given. Other applications will at once suggest themselves. This is not least important among the practical uses of glycerine. M. Lallement suggests another. Dentists find it difficult to preserve natural teeth till opportunity occurs for fitting them in the mouths of patients. After a time, the teeth become brittle; but soak them in glycerine, and their quality remains unimpaired.

And now to conclude with a very different matter, Sir James Matheson's doings in his Hebridean domain. The education of the female aborigines of the Lewis goes on prosperously. Instead of forty or fifty little ragged semi-savages attending occasionally at their own pleasure, there are now 120 regular scholars; clean and neatly clothed girls, of quite refined appearance, and much school-industry. This reform in externals, which has been accomplished by Lady Matheson, assisted by some ladies of Stornoway and the neighbourhood, has given a new tone to peasant society in the Ultima Thule; and cleanliness, neatness, and tidiness are the order of the day.

AN AUSTRALIAN MEG DODS.

Some little time after the discovery of gold at Bendigo, my mate and I, John Rawlings, moved over there from Ballarat, with the view of making our fortunes. We arrived late one night in a little gully lately opened, where we fixed our quarters in preference to the more favoured spots. If there is gold there, we said to ourselves, there is gold here; the only difference being that there it has been dug up, and here it hasn't. Such was our simple logic.

The following day was Sunday. It was a spring morning, bright and warm; the air was full of insects newly sprung into life, and their drowsy hum seemed to tell of a day of rest. The bells of some bullocks on the hills sounded pleasantly in our ears, and reminded us of home. We could have fancied ourselves near some village church, and pictured in our minds the ivied tower, the green lanes, and the spruce congregation on their way to prayer.

I was lying in the sun before our little tent, and Jack had just returned from a neighbouring store, where he had purchased a sheet of letter-paper and a large steel pen. He placed our largest shovel on the ground to serve as a desk, and having arranged his paper upon it, he attempted to write. He first assumed a sitting posture, which, however, he did not find to answer at all; then he knelt down, and after laboriously getting through about two lines, threw down the pen in despair; at last he lay down at full length, in a position not very elegant, nor, I should say, very comfortable, but in which he could keep his pen going. I observed him kicking his boots in the air occasionally, which, I suppose, he did when he was in want of an idea.

Presently a young fellow named Bruce, whose acquaintance we had made the night before, came up to talk over the news of the day. Observing Jack's singular position, he asked what he was doing.

Jack kicked up his boot, and said he was writing home. He regretted that the nibs of his pen were on bad terms, and would not keep together, and asked Bruce if there was any other pen in the neighbourhood.

'Why,' replied Bruce, 'if you would put your paper in your pocket, and go down to the Adelaide Coffee-house, you might have a table to write on properly.'

'The Adelaide Coffee-house!' exclaimed Jack, rolling himself over and sitting up. 'Where's that?'

'On the Bendigo. Our fellows often go there and have dinner, and read the newspaper.'

'Are you joking?' said Jack. 'Don't trifle with our feelings, my dear sir. Have a dinner and read the newspaper! I never heard of such a thing.'

'Oh, it's very true; and it's only half-a-crown for dinner.'

Jack was anxious to finish his letter, and he proposed that we should go and see these wonders, if Bruce would be our guide. He assented very readily, and after some delay occasioned by the exigencies of the toilet, we set off together.

Bruce's statement proved perfectly correct. The Adelaide Coffee-house did exist, and it was kept by Mrs Timmins. There was, indeed, a little man of quiet manners who occupied himself with digging, and who, I have heard say, was the husband of Mrs Timmins, but he evidently had no interest in the concern. Mrs Timmins was the proprietor, also the cook, waiter, and bar-maid. She was a fine, muscular woman, with severe, but handsome features, and a military air of command, which became her well. How shall I do justice to her admirable character? With untiring energy, working harder than any man that came to her dinners, she preserved order among the rough customers she met with, and kept her affairs in a perfect state of arrangement—with her accounts in her head, and her till in her pocket. Thoroughly honest herself, she would, as she said, stand no nonsense, and any attempt to impose upon her was sure to be detected at once. Humbug and dishonesty shrank abashed before her bright eye and downright tongue.

Such was Mrs Timmins. She, alas! has disappeared from the scene which she adorned, and the Adelaide Coffee-house has given place to more stately houses of entertainment, where you may get all the delicacies of the season as in the bill of fare. But the writer, who once enjoyed the acquaintance of that excellent woman, may be excused for paying his humble tribute to her memory, and for dwelling with regret on the recollection of the day when he first introduced himself to her table through the medium of a half-crown.

The Adelaide Coffee-house stood opposite to the government camp, at the side of the principal thoroughfare. It was a long, low tent, rather black in colour, and beside it stood a little shed which was the kitchen of the establishment. The place had not a very attractive appearance, and the only lure spread out to entice the passer-by, was a dingy sign in front, on which the name of the coffee-house was painted in small and irregular characters.

When we entered after our walk, we found the place nearly empty, and Mrs Timmins was busily at work at the further end. She scrutinised our appearance, and then asked what we wanted. Bruce replied humbly, that, if it was convenient, we should like some dinner.

'Dinner!' she exclaimed; 'you're too late. There's no more dinner to-day for anybody.'

'Don't say that, ma'am,' said Jack pathetically: 'we have walked five miles on purpose to dine here, and we are desperately hungry.'

'Come, Mrs Timmins,' added Bruce; 'let us have some dinner to-day, and we'll come early next time.'

'Mind you do,' said she; 'for I shan't do it again for you, *I* can tell you. All you'll get now is a bone of beef, and if you don't like that, you must dine off the pickles.'

Mrs Timmins's pickles were a prominent feature in her *cuisine*, and were justly celebrated. She laid a very clean cloth on the end of the table, and produced the bone of beef, which proved to be a very respectable joint, excellently cooked. She then requested us to 'fall to' and help ourselves, for she wasn't going to leave washing her dishes to wait on anybody. We said we should be sorry to put her to that inconvenience, and Jack proceeded to carve.

'Is there any chance of potatoes, Bruce?' I inquired.

'Never mind them,' replied he. 'If we behave ourselves, and don't bother Mrs Timmins—she's rather out of sorts just now—perhaps we may get some pudding.'

'Pudding by all means,' said Jack. 'This beef is capital; brown outside, and tender within, like Mrs Timmins herself.'

'What's that you say about me, young man?' demanded the hostess from among the dishes.

'I was praising your beef, my dear madam; I never tasted better, I assure you.'

Mrs Timmins looked round with rather an offended air; evidently she was one of those strong-minded persons who are averse to flattery.

'None of your soft soap with me, young man. The dinner's good enough for you, anyhow.'

'Mrs Timmins,' said Bruce rather timidly, 'I hope you've got some pudding for us.'

'Pudding? Well, I'm sure! At this time of day, too! Not exactly.'

And she returned to her occupation.

'O come, Mrs Timmins! You know I am an old customer. You won't leave us with only half a dinner, I am sure,' continued Bruce; but his entreaties produced no effect whatever.

'Do you think she has any pudding?' asked Jack.

'My dear fellow, I never knew that woman to fail in her supplies. She has *always* got a pudding somewhere at the bottom of her pot.'

'She requires a great deal of persuasion,' remarked Jack. 'You must keep on talking to her, at all events. Put her in a passion, if necessary. I hav'n't dined.'

'Mrs Timmins, the beef is getting cold,' resumed Bruce.

'Let it!' replied the lady without turning her head.

'Confound it! what's to be done?' said Bruce despairingly.

'I have it!' exclaimed Jack suddenly, and he desired me to hand him my plate. I did so; and having carefully removed the fragments from it, he wiped the knife and fork, and arranged them before me as before dinner.

'I am sorry you have no pudding, ma'am,' said he; 'for my friend here is a vegetarian, and will get no dinner.'

'A what?' inquired Mrs Timmins, coming up to us.

'A vegetarian, ma'am, from the neighbourhood of Bristol. He lives entirely on vegetables—though you wouldn't think it, to look at him—and can't eat any meat at all. He could perhaps manage to eat some pudding; but as you hav'n't got any, he'll have to go without his dinner.'

'Ah, you're a bad un!' said Mrs Timmins, shaking her finger at him.

'Ma'am!' exclaimed Jack, rather discomfited.

'You're a bad un! Do you think I ain't up to your tricks? Vegetarian, indeed! Now I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll give them two young men some pudding, but you shan't have a bit; and that'll teach you to come your nonsense over me next time.'

Jack looked the picture of despair.

'No, hang it, that's too bad, Mrs Timmins,' was all he was able to say.

She disappeared from the tent without waiting to hear his remonstrances, and presently returned with a large fragment of plum-pudding, from which she cut two great slices.

'Turn your plate up,' said she to me.

'Do what, ma'am?' I inquired.

'Turn your plate bottom up, can't you, to put the pudding on.'

I did so, and she placed one of the slices before me, and the other before Bruce, wholly disregarding the appealing looks which Jack sent at her. The pudding was excellent. We sympathised heartily with our friend's unfortunate position, and told him so. He had recovered his usual equanimity, and requested us to finish our dinner, and not exult over the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures.

Presently Mrs Timmins quitted the tent for a moment, and by an unaccountable act of forgetfulness—or perhaps some relenting of her stern resolve—she left the pudding on a table in the distance. Jack ran up to it and cut a slice before she returned, which he swallowed furtively with an unmoved countenance.

Having purchased a bundle of Mrs Timmins's Manilla cheroots, Jack occupied himself with finishing his letter, and Bruce and I read all through a copy of the *Argus*, which was made up as usual of three pages of advertisements and one article against the lieutenant-governor. We then thanked our hostess for her good cheer, and took our departure. Jack made her a bow, and said that although she had refused him her pudding—which he had no doubt was excellent—he was sufficiently compensated by the pleasure of making her acquaintance.

The severe countenance of Mrs Timmins relaxed into a smile, and she told him to be off with him—that he had eaten more pudding than any of us. Did he think she didn't see him?

Jack expressed his opinion that she was the most impracticable woman he had ever met with. I need scarcely say, however, that he did her injustice; and when afterwards we learned of her acts of kindness, rendered unsolicited to many a poor fellow stricken down by disease, even he came to respect the sterling womanly qualities which lay hidden under the rough exterior of this Australian Meg Dods.

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THE WIFE OF THE PALATINATE.

MANY will remember a very affecting instance of conjugal devotion which was detailed in the newspapers of 1855. The heroine was the wife of a poor man, who, having been dismissed from the Newcastle Infirmary in cureless agony from chronic rheumatism, longed eagerly to get back to his native village. The only means of conveyance, however, he could afford—the common carrier's cart—was not to be thought of: it would have tortured him to death; and the devoted wife took her husband on her back, and carried him, over rugged country roads, full fifty miles.

This goes quite beyond the spasmodic strainings of romance; yet it is far outstripped by another instance of the heroism of conjugal love, equally well authenticated, although it occurred two centuries ago.

In the year 1621, at the commencement of the Thirty Years' War, the rich province of the Rhinepfaltz, or Palatinate, was overrun by Spanish troops, who with lawless licence plundered and destroyed wherever they came. The princely abbacy of Hirt, about two miles from Germersheim, on the Rhine, was one of the most desirable spots in the whole province, and its wide-spreading domain afforded occupation to a numerous staff of stewards, bailiffs, herds, ploughmen, and foresters. Twice a year the Pfaltzgraf, or Count Palatine, held court at Hirt, whither he repaired with his princess—Elizabeth, daughter of James I. of England—to enjoy deer-stalking in summer, and to hunt wild boars in winter. On St Peter's day each year, his head-steward or bailiff, a gentleman named Christopher Theim, rendered to the pfaltzgraf a statement of his accounts, which shewed a yearly return of many thousand rix-dollars. Herr Theim was married to an amiable lady, named Catharina Herpin, and was a man of considerable wealth and property, possessing several estates at Neustadt, Wachenheim, Rockenhausen, and Hachdorff, besides houses and money. All the estates belonging to Herr Theim had embraced the Protestant faith, and consequently they, as well as the secularised abbacy of Hirt, did not fail to attract the rapacious eyes of the Spaniards, who ruthlessly claimed and seized whatever seemed desirable. They broke open cabinets and coffers, feasted on luxurious dainties and rich wines, and, within a very few days, had rifled the whole place. To these outrages the steward opposed what resistance he could, endeavouring, as in duty bound, to protect to the utmost of his power the property under his care. This interference being regarded by the lawless soldiery as a presumptuous infringement of their rights, they seized the bailiff, and forced him to swallow a liquid poured from a silver cup, which immediately paralysed his whole body. His muscular and robust frame became powerless; his sinews contracted so that he could not move a limb; he could not even stand without assistance, and his digestive organs became impaired.

Catharina Herpin, his wife, viewed his helpless state with dismay; but, apprehensive that something worse might befall, she determined to fly from the scene of danger. Secrecy was necessary to insure safety; the use of a carriage could not be obtained; and to add to her difficulty, she had two young daughters whom it was expedient to take with her. In these trying circumstances, Catharina resolved to depend solely on herself. She fastened her husband's powerless arms round her neck, and, with a little girl at each side, she hastened onwards towards the Rhine. A sympathising fisherman ferried her across the river, and on the opposite bank she entered the recesses of a forest, where she remained three days. At the end of that period, hunger compelled her to proceed, and with increased burdens and diminished strength, she slowly advanced by stages along the road. First carrying her helpless husband, in the same manner as before, some distance in advance, she set him down in an easy posture on a grassy bank by the wayside, and returned to bring her children. With one of these in her arms, and dragging the other wearily by her side, she traversed the same ground for the third time, till she reached the spot where she had left her husband; then changing her load, she advanced in the same painful manner another stage, and so continued till in a few days she arrived with her triple charge at the town of Rheinzabern, to the astonishment of the admiring populace. The sufferings and privations of the journey proved too much for the young girls: their piteous cries for food while on the road had been incessant, and had pierced their mother's heart with anguish; but a sharper thrust was in reserve for this courageous woman. Though received with kindness by the inhabitants, and provided with shelter and food, the children survived only two days, and then died in the arms of their mother. Public admiration having been excited, an allowance was granted to the family, which proved a valuable assistance; but the paralysis of Herr Theim's whole frame continued unalleviated. Every effort made to subdue it proved fruitless; and the only method by which nourishment could be administered to him, was to introduce it into his stomach through a quill.

The only effect that increasing trouble had on Catharina was to elevate her courage and intensify her devotion to her husband. Though unaccustomed to bear the gaze of curiosity or the drudgery of burden, she overcame her natural repugnance to these, and determined to pursue her journey to Strasbourg, in the hope of enjoying better medical advice. She accordingly set out, with her helpless husband fastened on her back, and made her way—a distance of ten German, or forty-five English miles—to Strasbourg. On her arrival in that city, her case met with the same kind consideration and help as formerly; and her husband enjoyed the gratuitous advice of an eminent physician, who enjoyed a salary from the town. This doctor, after careful examination, pronounced the recovery of the invalid to be hopeless, unless he could be conveyed to the Swiss baths at Baden on the Aar. Nothing daunted by the length and difficulty of the route, this indefatigable woman at once determined to undertake the journey, and having again saddled herself, with her precious burden, she started on her wearisome pilgrimage. At each town through which she passed, she seems to have sought out some medical man, from whose advice she hoped to gain some useful or consolatory hint; and even in the face of bitter discouragement from some of these, she persevered. At Neuburg, thirty miles from Strasbourg, she consulted Dr John Melscher; and at Ensigheim, eighteen miles further on, she consulted the town doctor, both of whom affirmed that her husband's life would not last a week; but her hope was proof against despair; and with indomitable perseverance, she pressed on her way.

The old chronicle from which these particulars are drawn, enters minutely into the details of her progress. At Russach, ten miles further than Ensigheim, the household physician of the archbishop of Strasbourg again held out hopes of ultimate recovery, and confirmed the advice on which she had resolved to act, by pointing to the Swiss baths as the most likely means of improvement. At Gebsweiter, ten miles further along the Rhine, an old physician was consulted, who also spoke favourably of the baths, but gave it as his opinion that, if they failed to effect a cure, sudden and speedy death would probably result. The next stage of Catharina's progress was across the river forty miles, to Freiburg, where she consulted the famous Dr Fedderer, and placed her husband under his treatment for eight weeks, but without any perceptible improvement. For eighteen weeks now, Herr Theim had been unable to receive any nourishment, except a little wine or soup introduced into his stomach through a quill, and nothing had been found which could afford him any relief. Before leaving Freiburg, however, a slight improvement was effected by means of a desperate kill-or-cure remedy, suggested by a brother-in-law of Dr Fedderer. But it was too slight to alter Catharina's resolution to carry her husband to the Swiss baths. Still forty miles further on, at Rheinfelden, she consulted two eminent practitioners, and was gratified to find, even on the borders of Switzerland, that the baths of that country were thought likely to be beneficial. With elated hopes, she persevered, and soon bore her beloved burden into Baden. Here she immediately began to apply the remedy she had come so far to seek; and for eleven weeks she carried her husband daily from their lodging down to the baths, and back again. The spectacle of a woman thus devotedly nursing her husband, and the report that she had in this manner carried him from the Palatinate, surrounded her with a halo of interest in the eyes of the inhabitants, many of whom paid her visits; and a few of the richer or more generous sent her presents, which she faithfully applied to help her husband's recovery. By slow degrees, he began to amend. In the course of a few weeks, he was so far improved that he could be fed with pap and other spoon-nourishment—the necessary diet being kindly supplied by the Princess of Furstenburg and another sympathising lady, both of whom frequented the baths at the time. The next step in his improvement was the acquisition of sufficient strength to stand without support; but every attempt to walk without assistance, even with the aid of crutches, proved futile, as the want of muscular power in his hands prevented him closing them so as to hold anything. His body, however, continued to appear little more than a skeleton; and when in the bath, he floated on the water, as the old chronicler relates, like a piece of cork.

The expenses of their long journey, medical fees, medicines, and their living at the baths, soon exhausted what little money Catharina had scraped together from the bounty of friends or saved from the plunder of their property, and she was at length compelled to leave Baden. Allured by the fame of a Jewish doctor at Stanz, a town seventy miles distant, she bent her steps thither. On reaching the town, this physician, having his attention drawn to her, became interested in her case, and promised her relief for her husband. The prescription he gave her, and the manner in which it was acted upon, afford a striking illustration of the progress of the medical art in the seventeenth century, and the superstition which attached to it among the people. The doctor directed her to take a calf, and, having cut its throat, to preserve the *middle blood*. This, mixed with vinegar and salt to a consistency, she was to use as a liniment, and rub her husband's limbs with it daily for four weeks. He also gave her a small bag, containing a slip of paper inscribed with Hebrew characters, which the patient was to wear for a time round his neck. The good woman, fearing that the use of the first of these remedies might prove hurtful in some way to her faith as a Christian, resolved not to try it; but she carefully suspended the amulet from her husband's neck, and kept it there. Though, as the old record says, 'she in her simplicity rejected the most natural remedy to take the improbable one,' yet, probably, from the influence of former means, her husband in fourteen days had made some progress in his recovery.

From Stanz, Catharina continued her journey onwards to Rupperschwyll. In order to reach this town, she had to climb two high mountains, named respectively the Sattel and Etzel mountains; and while passing the latter of these, an accident of an extremely dangerous character befell her. It was a long day's journey; and in order to reach Rupperschwyll before nightfall, she started with her burden at five o'clock in the morning, and travelled almost the whole day without rest or refreshment. As she was descending the opposite side, she was seized with a fainting-fit at one of the steepest parts of the road, and falling, she rolled a considerable distance down the slope with her husband, sometimes uppermost and sometimes below her. She contrived at length to steady herself by grasping some bushes; and in this position she remained, till a good Samaritan, who was passing, came to her assistance, after having invoked the Holy Mother and Saint Anna. He first relieved Catharina from the danger of choking, by cutting the bands that fastened her husband's arms round her neck, and he then removed the patient to a more secure spot at a little distance, where he laid him in an easy posture to wait till his wife should be able to resume the journey. After a brief rest, she again took up her burden, and late at night arrived at the long narrow bridge, which all tourists must know who have visited the charming scenery of the neighbourhood; and reeling as she was from fatigue and exhaustion, she passed along its whole length—full two miles—without accident, though undefended by parapet or rail.

From Rupperschwyll, the journey was continued through Herisau, the capital of Appenzell, to Constance, where medical advice and a curiously compounded bath effected no further improvement in Herr Theim's health. From Constance, the banded pair bent their steps towards Bavaria, through Ravensburg and Meningen—a route which, even at the present day, with all the appliances of modern travel, is wild and dreary enough. The object of their visit to Bavaria seems to have been to claim payment of a bond for 700 gulden (about L.60), which a former duke of that country had granted in happier days to Theim's father. They found the representative of the debtor—Duke Maximilian, of Pfaltz Neuburg—at his residence Neuburg, on the Danube; and on presenting their demand, they were coolly told that the duke had not at that time sufficient money at his command, as he was engaged in building a convent for a company of Jesuits; but when that was finished, if he had enough left, he would then liquidate the bond. It is to be hoped, for the credit of humanity, that the princely debtor, when he gave this reply, knew nothing of the devotion of the woman whom he spurned; but the contrary seems probable, for the inhabitants of the ducal manor, on hearing that the pilgrim pair were sufferers for their Protestant faith, refused them even the common rites of hospitality.

At Augsburg, a Protestant town, sixty miles from Neuburg, a medical man of great celebrity again advised the baths at Baden, from which the first decided benefit had been derived, as likely to facilitate complete recovery; and, accordingly, the indefatigable Catharina turned to retrace her long painful journey through Suabia and Switzerland. On her way, after traversing about 140 miles, she consulted the headsman or executioner of St Gall—a functionary both trusted and dreaded for his sympathetic cures—probably in the expectation of receiving some amulet or charm. He, however, prescribed bleeding; but as she regarded this as too severe a process in her husband's weak state, she declined to permit it. After a rest of three weeks, she pursued her toilsome way, over similar mountains to those which had formerly cost her so much trouble, to Zurich. At Schaffhausen, about thirty miles further, where there was a Protestant community, every house was gladly opened to receive and shelter a martyr to the faith. Cheered, and perhaps materially assisted, they pursued their way to Berne, and thence to the healing springs of Baden. Here at length, after a renewed course of bathing, the long-tried Theim found relief from his sufferings, and his affectionate wife enjoyed the reward of her toil in seeing her husband so far recovered that, with the support of a staff, he could walk alone.

Having recovered so far, he seems to have been unwilling to remain longer a burden on the charity of his Protestant friends, and therefore determined to seek out the pfaltzgraf, his master, in whose service he had suffered so much. The prince was living at this time at the Hague, in a state of dependence on the States-general of Holland; and accordingly the route of the affectionate couple lay through the entire breadth of Germany along the Rhine to Cologne, the whole of which distance they travelled on foot. From Cologne, they took a boat to Utrecht, whence the distance to the Hague was short. The result of their application to the pfaltzgraf is not stated: probably his allowance was barely enough for his own wants. At all events, we find our unfortunate pair shortly afterwards again travelling southwards. They had got as far as the fortress of Wesel, when, from some defect in their passports, they were turned back, and retired to Amsterdam. Here, under the best medical treatment, a complete cure was effected; and here, accordingly, the chronicler concludes his narrative. Some idea may be formed of the devotion and endurance of this courageous woman when it is stated, that she carried her husband on her back 172 German, or about 800 English miles, over hill and dale, across rivers, and through manifold dangers, and that their pilgrimages occupied a term of about three years, animated by the one hope that his health might be restored. We do not know whether there is another instance of self-sacrifice and patient, untiring devotion on record that can compare with this; and we may add, that the history of their wanderings is said to be vouched by trustworthy evidence, and that the fact of their residence in Amsterdam in 1624 is clearly ascertained. At the peace of 1648, the pfaltzgraf was reinstated in his dominions, but we know not whether his faithful steward, with his tried spouse, ever returned to receive again his post and his property.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR.

While in the slaveholding states, the free coloured people are subject to great injustice from the laws directly framed to oppress them, in the free states generally they have been persecuted by a cruel prejudice, that has not always allowed them to remain secure in life and limb. Their political and civil privileges differ in different states. The statute-books of Indiana and Illinois, both free states, are disgraced by a series of what are termed 'Black Laws;' the effect of which is to deprive the coloured man not only of all political privileges, but even to render his oath invalid. The state of Ohio has repealed her black laws only within the last few years, after a long agitation on the subject. Yet, the laws respecting the qualification of voters are not clearly defined, and, as a consequence, in the northern part of the state, where a strong anti-slavery feeling prevails, free men of colour are permitted to vote; but in the southern districts that border on the slave state of Kentucky, the reverse is the rule. In Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut, whilst they are not personally oppressed by legislation, they are excluded from all political privileges. In the state of New York, they are entitled to vote at elections, provided they are possessed of real estate to the value of 250 dollars. Gerrit Smith, a well-known philanthropist and reformer, about six years ago, created in this state nearly one thousand voters of this class, by endowing them with property for the necessary qualification from his vast landed possessions. In all the New-England States, Connecticut excepted, the votes of free coloured persons are received on equal terms with those of the whites; and in Massachusetts, they are eligible to the highest offices in the gift of the commonwealth.

Nothing is more common in the northern states than to hear the free people of colour spoken of disparagingly, if not as a nuisance which the country would be gladly rid of. As is well known, the plan of expatriation was proposed, and has been partly carried out by the American Colonisation Society, the well-conducted settlement of Liberia on the coast of Africa being the result. The remarkable prosperity of that free republic, which is susceptible of immense increase, indicates, if nothing else did, that the world has laboured under some mistake about the mental qualities of negroes and mulattoes; and, on this account, the plantation of Liberia, apart from all considerations as to the motives of its projectors, must, I think, be accepted as a great fact—a fact in favour of negro improvability. But it is not necessary to go to Liberia in vindication of the character of this abused branch of the human race. That the progenitors of the present free coloured population of the northern states were degraded and ignorant, none will deny; but to say that their descendants, now in the third and fourth generation, are deserving of the same reputation, would be unjust and untrue. Should we grant that they are generally degraded, which we by no means admit, can those who are inclined to disparage and revile them, point to what has been done towards their enlightenment and elevation? Far from assisting them on the road to honour and preferment, they have left no means untried to crush in them every noble aspiration, and to keep the whole population of every shade of black in a despicably mean position—exiled from all communion in joy, hope, sorrow.

The force and prevalence of this prejudice can scarcely be imagined by any one out of America. That the colour of a man's skin, without the slightest reference to his moral qualities, or even to his wealth, should determine his social or political position, savours of the ridiculous to Europeans. Yet such is the case in the United States. Nay more, even when all trace of the negro is lost by intermixture, and he no longer presents any distinction in features, the knowledge that he is of African ancestry, is sufficient to place him in the proscribed list; he is consigned beyond the possibility of extrication to the difficult position sustained by the free coloured people of the northern states.

The sufferings endured by this class, from 1835 to 1842, were of a shocking kind. It was no unusual occurrence for an inoffensive man of colour, particularly if he was decently dressed, to be publicly assaulted by white persons, for no cause whatever; and if his outcries attracted attention, no notice was taken when they were understood to come from 'only a nigger.' With the exception of a few abolitionists, the free coloured people had no friend; the evils of the agitation of the slave question at that period being unscrupulously visited on them. In scarcely any of the large cities of the North did they escape violence. Riots of the most frightful nature occurred in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Cincinnati. The dwellings of the coloured people were burned down, their furniture destroyed, and their lives were taken by the miscreants who were permitted to give unchecked rein to their hateful passions. In some instances, their churches were razed to the ground, as if it had been a crime for this unfortunate race to form part of a Christian community.

This storm of persecution having passed over, the free coloured population in the northern states gradually improved in public opinion. In some quarters, and among certain classes of whites, prejudice is as strong as ever; but on the whole, it has been greatly softened—a circumstance attributable not less to the general progress of enlightened sentiment, than to the feelings of compassion excited by the picturesque and affecting incidents in the lifelike narrations of Mrs Stowe. Yet, except in Massachusetts, these feelings do not go the length of doing complete justice to the people of colour. Though subject to a general school-rate, their children are not admitted to the higher kind of academies; the mere elements of education, at district coloured schools, being their full allowance. In the Sabbath schools, the same division is observable. St Andrew's Episcopal Church at Philadelphia has under its patronage and care a black as well as a white Sabbath school, in separate establishments. Once in each year, the children of both schools are brought into the church, that their progress may be ascertained. The white lambs of the flock are placed beside the pastor under the shadow of the pulpit, whilst the black sheep are stuck up in an obscure part of the organ loft. The whites are usually catechised in presence of the congregation, and the blacks are kindly permitted to sing a doxology while the congregation are dispersing.

The common practice of excluding coloured people from all but certain inferior classes of seats in the churches, is well known; and to such an extent has this been carried, that in most large towns they have established and support churches for themselves. In passing along the streets of New York on Sunday, you see churches pouring out none but whites, and others none but people of various shades of colour, just as if there were a white and black Gospel. Only a few years ago, in one of the Presbyterian churches of New York, there were pews in the gallery marked B. M., signifying Black Members. An English clergyman on a visit to the States, who had heard of these proscribed seats, took an opportunity of testifying against such unchristian arrangements, by taking his family to this church, and seating himself in the midst of the B. M.s, to the astonishment and chagrin of the reverend gentleman who officiated, and the horror and disgust of the deacons, who were greatly scandalised by the stranger's want of self-respect. This quiet method of reproving the congregation of this church had the desired effect, and the B. M.s have since been removed. Negro pews are not now so fashionable as formerly; yet a coloured man would have to stand a long time in a genteel New York church before he would be offered a seat.

C. K. Whipple, in his able tract, entitled *Relations of Anti-slavery to Religion*, relates the following incident: 'In the year 1830, a coloured man bought and paid for a pew in Park Street Church, then and since the head-quarters of "orthodoxy" in Boston. He occupied it, with his family, a Sunday forenoon; but on returning in the afternoon, a constable, employed by the church committee, forcibly prevented his entrance; the Prudential Committee wrote him a prohibitory letter; and the church, in a church-meeting called thereafter for the express purpose, *voted* that he should not be allowed to occupy his own pew. They then proceeded to discuss, in five or six meetings following, each opened and closed with prayer, the most convenient and effective way of excluding the whole coloured race from equal participation in their worship. Finally, at the suggestion of one who bore, while he lived, the very highest reputation for piety in that church, a new pew-deed was framed, containing a provision enabling them to effect their purpose, and the pews of the church are still held under that deed. It has been so perfectly obvious that any similar attempt would meet the like result, that the trial has never been repeated in Boston. A Baptist church, however (Rev. Baron Stow's, in Rowe Street), has guarded itself against such attempts, by inserting in its pew-deeds the restriction that the pews shall be sold only to "respectable white persons." Whoever of that congregation is not a saint, can at least claim the credit of being a respectable white sinner.'

Notwithstanding these and all other indignities, it is an undoubted fact, that the free people of colour persevere in improving their circumstances, and in seizing on every possible advantage in the way of education. Still excluded from the colleges in New York or Philadelphia, coloured young men are admitted as a favour to some of the other northern colleges and higher order of academies on a footing of equality with whites. The consequence of this irrepressible desire for instruction is observable in the rise of coloured men in northern society; there being now in Boston coloured lawyers practising at the bar, coloured physicians, lecturers, and manufacturers. A prejudice, however, long outlives its expulsion from the minds of the more intelligent classes, of which we have till this day a lamentable example in the treatment of Jews in England. Educated, refined in sentiment, wealthy, admitted to the highest society, Jews are still excluded by technical forms from the House of Commons; and, time after time, the city of London returns a gentleman to parliament who is not allowed to take his seat, unless he make a declaration of a religious nature in violation of his conscience. So does prejudice operate in America. All are not to be blamed, because the free people of colour are subject to vulgar persecution. The prejudice against them has not yet vanished from the minds of every variety of the 'snob' genus. By white workmen, who fear rivalry and contamination; by conceited parvenus, who dread a lowering of their dignity; by a miscellaneous body of hotel-keepers, railway-car conductors, managers of theatres, deacons of churches, and others who are alarmed for offending 'customers,' the repugnance to associate with, or to give house or seat room to coloured people, is still daily manifested. Public feeling on the subject seems to be in a transition state. A coloured person, in travelling, will sometimes be treated well, sometimes ill; sometimes insulted, sometimes passed over with indifference. The administration even of the law is modified by the feelings of its administrators.

Not long since, a coloured gentleman, a dealer in real estate, was compelled to ride in one of the negro-cars, although at the time he held stock in the company to the amount of ten thousand dollars. The ejection of a coloured lady and her infant from the cars in Massachusetts, created so much sympathy as to cause the passage of a law in that state, imposing a fine of six thousand dollars on any railway company or individual guilty of this offence in future. In the city of New York, suits have at various times been instituted against the proprietors of omnibuses and street railway-cars for the forcible ejection of coloured people. In one instance, judgment was given in favour of the plaintiff, and damages awarded to the amount of 250 dollars. But there is no dependence on these decisions. The case of the Rev. J. W. Pennington, a coloured preacher in New York, a most respectable and amiable person, who was well received in Europe, and holds the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Heidelberg, deserves particular attention. Recently, he was expelled from a railway-car belonging to the Sixth Avenue Railway Company, and forthwith brought an action before the superior court of New York. Below, we give some notes of the proceedings in this curious affair, from the pages of the *European*, an independent New York newspaper.[*] It will be seen that the judge uttered some strange sentiments, and that the jury decided against Dr Pennington.

Mrs Webb, a coloured lady, apparently a quadroon, from the United States, has lately visited England on an elocutionary tour. Accomplished in manners, well educated, and every way acceptable as a guest in the houses of people of distinction, this lady has become well known for her elegant readings of the works of popular writers. It gives one a curious idea of American notions on colour, to know that this ladylike person has been subject to indignities in different parts of the states, for no other reason than that she is not a pure white. She has mentioned to us, that in travelling through Pennsylvania, she was refused access to a railway-car, although she had purchased the appropriate ticket. On presenting herself for admission, the conductor put his arm across the door, to debar her entrance, and could not be induced to admit her. With much spirit, she stooped suddenly below his arm, and gaining an entrance, she pushed his arm down, to enable her husband to follow her into the car, where both received the congratulations of the passengers. The conductor was enraged, but, from the aspect of affairs, did not dare to expel them.

About a year ago, on visiting Boston, Mrs Webb went by recommendation to the Marlboro Hotel in that city. The Marlboro is known as 'the pious hotel.' It is an establishment celebrated for its religious usages—public prayers every morning, and a grace at every meal to which the guests assemble. Well, here, surely, she was safe? Quite the reverse. Mrs Webb was not allowed to attend prayers, nor to take her meals at the public tables, but compelled to remain in her own apartment. This was not all. The landlord had the meanness to charge the usual additional price for private meals, although remonstrated with, and shewn that her exclusion from the public rooms was his own act. Much to the credit of the press of Massachusetts, this abominable treatment was strongly condemned; and we can fancy that by the drilling on the occasion, the Marlboro's sense of religious consistency must have undergone some improvement.

In Massachusetts and some other free states, coloured persons are legally recognised as American citizens; but this is only a local advantage. As formerly mentioned, the federal government does not allow that they belong to the category of citizens. They are tolerated, and have a kind of protection; that is all. They will be given a pass, but not a passport. They are all of them 'niggers,' not Americans; and a few years ago it was no uncommon thing to hear an Irish or German immigrant, who had not been six months in the States, talk of sending the niggers out of the country, back to Africa, to which they belonged.

In the refusal of citizenship, the supreme government has forgotten the public services of the coloured race in the trying times of American history, when the clouds of adversity were most threatening. Answering to the call, blacks of every shade stood side by side with the whites in the revolutionary war. The first blood shed in the cause of American independence was that of Christopher Attocks, a mulatto, who was shot by British troops in the streets of Boston. In the swamps of the Carolinas, under the banners of Sumpter and Marion—with Lafayette at Yorktown, and with Washington at Valley Forge and Trenton—wherever the flag of the struggling Americans was unfurled, there might be found the negro cheerfully fighting for the national cause, for that liberty in which his descendants are denied to participate. Hundreds of coloured men, who are to-day deprived of all political privileges in the United States, can remember the scars displayed by their grandfathers—scars received in defence of a country which has not only bestowed on their children obloquy and the hardest bondage, but denies their right to call themselves Americans.

To resume a former comparison, the free coloured people inhabiting the United States have, like the down-trodden Hebrew race in England and other parts of Europe, thriven under adversity. As the Jews, by being excluded from the enjoyment of common political privileges, bestowed their whole energies on certain branches of trade, and thus accumulated immense wealth, so have the free coloured race—negroes, mulattoes, quadroons, and so forth—betaken themselves to such industrial courses as were left open to them, and in many instances with the most favourable results. Though contemned or neglected, they form among themselves social circles of no mean quality. They dress as well as their white compeers; and in point of manners there is nothing, as a general rule, to find fault with. At all events, we can testify that the more aspiring among them who have visited Great Britain, do no discredit to the land of their nativity, and are treated in every respect as if they could boast of a purely Anglo-Saxon origin. W. C.

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[*] The counsel for the defendants contended that they were not bound to carry coloured people in all their cars. He referred to the constitution of the United States, to shew that there was a line of demarcation between the two races, and asked the jury if a coloured man would be permitted to sit at the public table of the St Nicholas, or any of our principal hotels. He also stated that the number of cars provided by the defendants for the coloured people was larger in proportion to the population than the number for white people. Judge Slosson, in charging the jury, spoke of this as a peculiarly difficult case; the chief point for consideration being, whether the business and interests of the company would suffer, from allowing blacks an equality as passengers with whites. The jury, after two hours' deliberation, found a verdict for the defendants. The *European* quotes the following opinion from the New York *Herald*: 'Upon this point our northern people are remarkably squeamish, while we know that all over the South it is quite a common thing to see master and mistress and slave, whites and blacks, occupying the same stage or car, without any symptom of a turned-up nose on account of the presence of Pomp or Dinah.' The *European* adds the remark: 'If no legal distinctions were made in the free states between white and coloured men, the prejudice against the latter would soon disappear (it has no existence in Europe), and they would be allowed by the whites to work along with them, learn trades, and become lawyers and physicians. They are now a persecuted race—reviled, too, on account of the direct and inevitable consequences of the bad treatment to which they are subjected. When sick, they must be doctored, if at all, by a white physician; when their property, their lives, liberties, or reputations are imperiled by judicial procedures, if they have any counsel at all, he must be a white man—for no coloured man is, in this city, allowed to become a physician or a lawyer. It is different, however, in Massachusetts. This brutal prejudice, which exists in no other country, is encouraged by the slave-owners for their own purposes. The enforced degradation of the coloured man of the North is used as an argument for keeping up slavery in the South.'

HENDRIK CONSCIENCE.

Of all the minor European states, there is scarcely one that is more interesting to the observer than the kingdom of Belgium. Small as it is, it has, from the character of its people, acquired a respectability that is sadly wanting to other powers of greater political weight. In this little land, we see among the people a most enviable degree of material prosperity, while, at the same time, it enjoys an amount of liberty in its government that, except in our own country, is hardly to be found elsewhere in Europe. Nor is Belgium less interesting from its past history than from its present condition and prospects. Many of our readers have probably spent some little time in its old towns, and they cannot but remember the quaint buildings, the strange costumes, and curious usages they observed. Turn where the visitor will, he finds some object which at once carries back his mind some centuries, and compels him to think of the days when the merchants of Flanders were a power in Northern Europe, and the various guilds met and opposed, often successfully, the mailed chivalry of France. As he walks along, too, he sees inscriptions and hears words uttered in what appears to be a rude uncultivated *patois*, wanting alike the elegance of the French, and the masculine vigour of the German. Such a jargon, he perhaps thinks, cannot fairly be considered a language, and, to some extent, he is right. Until within the last few years, Flemish was in the position of a mere patois. Unlike its kindred Dutch, which has long boasted a respectable, though little-known literature, it was utterly uncultivated, and the only books printed in it were some few prayer-books, and those collections of tales, songs, and ballads which form the delight of the ruder part of every community. The educated classes spoke and thought in French, and Flemish was left to the smaller shopkeepers and to the peasantry. Something like a revolution has, however, begun. Some men of education have taken the despised dialect under their patronage, and now a Flemish movement is progressing in Belgium, one of the chief objects of which is the cultivation of what is the language of the great mass of the people of the country. We may perhaps be inclined to doubt how far it is expedient to attempt to give life and vigour to a language which is spoken by so small a part of the population of Europe, and which must ever, while it exists, form a barrier isolating the Flemings from their neighbours. Be this as it may, however, the movement is going on, and it is a strange fact that, when upon a recent occasion of national rejoicing in Belgium, prizes were offered for the best poems in French and Flemish, out of the innumerable compositions which were submitted to the judges, not one of those written in French could be considered as possessing even the moderate degree of merit which we presume is required upon occasions of the kind, while, on the other hand, several of the Flemish compositions appeared to be deserving of honourable mention.

Among the promoters of this Flemish movement, Hendrik Conscience is certainly the best known, if not the only one at all known in England. Several of his novels and tales have been translated into our language, and have acquired a well-merited popularity. Who has not been delighted with the *Recruit* and with *Blind Rosa?* Which of our readers has not sympathised with the mental sufferings of the *Poor Nobleman?* We have all read *Vefa* and the *Miser*, and wondered over the strange tale of *Abulfaragus;* and the *refrain* of *Rikketikketak* is as familiar to our ears as any of the nursery-songs of our childhood.

Much of the popularity which has attended these tales is doubtless owing to the vividness of the descriptions of everyday Flemish life we find in them, and to the general truth of their colouring. We do not think our author can be looked upon as happy in his attempts at the regular historical romance; and the chief reason for the discrepancy between this and his less ambitious sketches is to be found in the fact, that in the one class of writings he has had nothing to guide him but his imagination and the lifeless records of old times, while for the other he has found a never-failing mine in his own experience. His life has been an eventful one; circumstances have driven him to mix with every class of his fellow-countrymen, from the highest to the humblest, and at times he seems to have been reduced to straits that remind us of what we read of in the literary history of England during the last century.

Hendrik Conscience was born at Antwerp in 1812. His father had served in the French marine at one time as a midshipman, and later as an *employé* in the docks at Antwerp. On the break-up of the first French empire, he settled in that city as a merchant. Our author's mother died before he had reached his seventh year; and thus from that period young Hendrik was chiefly left to himself, little, if at all, controlled by the authority of his surviving parent. Fortunately for him, part of his father's business consisted in the purchase of old books and papers; and thus the boy found the means of acquiring some knowledge. He read everything that came across him, and apparently the mass of books he thus indiscriminately devoured produced no evil effect upon his mind. Some years after his wife's death, the father, who seems to have been a man of a somewhat eccentric turn of mind, left Antwerp, bought some land in its neighbourhood, and built a sort of hermitage. There, while their father was attending to his business, and travelling through different parts of France and Belgium, Hendrik and a brother of his were left altogether to themselves. They never quitted the house and the garden which surrounded it. All the necessaries of life were brought in from the outside, and thus the two boys for some time led the lives of two hermits. After a period of some three years spent by them in this solitude, their father married a second time. But the strange education, or rather want of education, of the boys now began to exhibit the natural results. For years they had been to a great extent their own masters, and there had been no one to teach them the duty of obedience. The consequence was, that upon all possible occasions, they resisted the authority of their step-mother; and the disputes which arose in the family in consequence of this conduct, grew so bitter, that it was found necessary to remove the boys from their home; and they were accordingly sent to a school in Antwerp. At this establishment, Hendrik resolved to become a teacher, and to adopt that profession as his means of livelihood. All his studies were accordingly bent in that direction; and perhaps our author might at this moment be wasting away his life in teaching village-dunces the rudiments of grammar, but for the great political events which at that period began to trouble Europe. The French Revolution of 1830 broke out, and was successful; and the Belgians, animated alike by national and religious feelings, determined to follow the example of their neighbours, and to shake off the Dutch yoke, which, since 1815, had pressed heavily upon their country. Conscience, like other young men, was fired with the enthusiasm of the time. He turned his back upon school and home, and took service in the Belgian army as a volunteer. He saw some sharp fighting during the years which ensued, but never rose in his regiment beyond the rank of serjeant-major. However, if he was unsuccessful in obtaining advancement in the profession into which he had so ardently thrown himself, he achieved some distinction in a different way. After the successful completion of the revolution, it seems that a considerable amount of discontent appeared in the ranks of the Belgian army. Conscience became the poet of his regiment, and it is stated that his verses contributed not a little to add fuel to the rising flame. Strange to say, these first literary essays of an author whose best fame has since been achieved by his Flemish writings, were in the French language. At that period of his life, however, Hendrik had the same contempt which was generally felt for the tongue of the great mass of his fellow-countrymen.

Shortly after this, the Belgian army was placed upon a new footing, and our author, with many others, obtained his discharge from the service. He spent some time vainly seeking for employment, and at length, as a last resource, determined to try his hand upon authorship. He wrote his first book, *The Year of Wonders*—a series of scenes from the days of the Spanish supremacy in the Netherlands. The work, like many other first works, was unsuccessful as a pecuniary speculation, although, in a literary point of view, it met with some appreciation in Belgium. When Hendrik came to settle his account with his publisher, he found himself deeply in debt. Something, however, must be done, if he wished to exist. His father, who had had several children by his second wife, could no longer support him, and Hendrik left his home once more—this time for ever. All he possessed in the world, when he took this decided step, was two francs, and a few clothes tied up in a handkerchief. With a heavy heart, and scarcely knowing what he should do, he bent his steps towards Antwerp. In this city, however, some little good-fortune was in store for him; and he there met an old school-fellow, who introduced him to his father. This gentleman took some interest in the poor fortune-seeker, and, at all events, secured him the necessaries of life by providing unlimited credit for him at an inn. Wappers, the painter, also made his acquaintance, and became his friend, and even presented him to King Leopold. This presentation was well-nigh prevented by the very unromantic circumstance of our author's wardrobe being so scanty, that he had no clothes in which he could decently make his appearance before his sovereign. With Wappers' assistance, however, this difficulty was surmounted: the king received Conscience graciously, accepted a copy of *The Year of Wonders* from him, and afforded him some pecuniary assistance. Encouraged by this, Conscience now published a second work, which met with the same unfortunate fate as its predecessor; and a third, *The Lion of Flanders*, which cost its author fourteen months' labour, and brought him in the magnificent profit of six francs.

Conscience now found himself seriously embarrassed in consequence of the want of success of these publications. He began to think, also, that these repeated failures were proofs that he could not expect to earn a livelihood by the pursuits of literature. He therefore came to the determination of henceforth earning his bread by the work of his hands; and he hired himself to a gardener as a common labourer. In this situation he spent thirteen months; but the close of his trials was at length at hand. His friend Wappers again came to his assistance, and once more called the attention of King Leopold to the struggling author. The result was, that Conscience obtained a place in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Antwerp, which secured him from all want. He now began that series of tales and sketches which have given him a European reputation. His works no longer meet with the fate of his earlier productions. They are sold and read, and have been translated into many languages. For several years, his life has been easy and happy. The author of *Flemish Interiors* informs us that Conscience is married, and the father of two sons. Thus, after all his struggles, we may presume that he is in the enjoyment of that comfort and domestic happiness, for the absence of which even the most widely spread literary fame can afford but a poor compensation.

NO. 19. W.

There has been a good deal of talk lately about model lodging-houses for the lower classes; but I think, for my part, charity should begin at home, and that we should first get model lodging-houses for ourselves. Why are there no respectable furnished apartments in the whole of London where Mr Poppet and I can afford to live upon our two or three hundred a year? One first-floor sitting-room, and two tolerably large bedrooms (on account of the nurse and baby), with cooking and attendance, is what we wish we may get for about L.7 a month in vain. Advertise? Well, we *have* advertised, and with great success, numerically speaking, indeed. 'All the comforts of a home,' 'cleanliness and attention,' 'no other lodgers in the house,' 'no extras,' 'a cabstand opposite,' 'the gratuitous use of a piano,' 'draught beer over the way'—every allurement, in short, that fancy could suggest to the designing mind, has been offered to us for the above price, and lower; but with what result? We have spent the money, and more than the money, I do believe, in removals and compensations for removal.

Once we thought we had obtained a certain status in society by taking apartments where there were 'two members of parliament on the second floor;' but these turned out to be Irish members, who occupied a double-bedded room immediately over our own chamber, and we had no rest for their Maynooth and similarly patriotic speeches for hours. 'Sir-r-r-r,' one would begin, 'I came down to this House to-night with no intention of addressing it; but the tants that have been levelled at my beloved country, the first gem of the urth and first flower in the say,' &c.: after which the other honourable member would 'follow,' as he expressed it, 'upon the same soide, in reply.' One little boy was retained all day in their sitting-room to take down their eloquence in shorthand; and 'hear, hear,' 'chair, chair,' 'order, order,' and '*Mister* Spaker' resounded over us continuously until the two senators went down in an omnibus together to serve up their *réchauffés* to 'the House.' The dining-room had been seized upon by two clerks in the city, under pretence of its not being wanted—although they paid only five shillings a week apiece for sleeping accommodation—and the third floor was the residence of three, and the habitual resort of four other medical students. These never came in till two o'clock in the morning, when they would usually insist upon having some hot supper, and come to the door of our apartment to borrow forks and glasses. Moreover, the domestic being fast asleep in some unknown region, Mr Poppet had not seldom to go down and let them in, because they had a habit of dropping their latch-keys into the letter-box in their endeavours to open the door. Lastly, in the attic of this house was a clergyman, who had resided there for fifteen months without offering any remuneration whatever to the landlady: he, however, gave but little trouble, she said, made his own bed, and lived exclusively upon rolls and Bologna sausages—still it was very annoying. The place, notwithstanding, was not, I believe, more unsatisfactory than others; certainly not so bad as our apartments in Porchester Oblong, for instance, where the landlord and his wife played cards all day, Sunday, being Jews, and their two female servants came up to me in a fainting condition, protesting that we did not leave enough provisions for their sustenance—they being made entirely dependent on the lodger for support. It was upon this occasion that Mr Poppet raised the standard of revolt. 'You have had the choosing of our place of abode for the last two years, my love,' he said, 'and I think I may say without contradiction, that you have chosen them excessively ill. No; I don't regard your going into hysterics in the least; all I have to observe is, that in future *I* choose the lodgings;' and he took his hat up and went out upon that errand at once. It is unnecessary to relate here how he pitched upon an *entresol* in the Regent's Quadrant, and paid two guineas deposit-money for the same, and never took me even to look at it after all, in consequence of communications he received from bachelor friends; or how he got a most excellent bargain of three sitting-rooms and as many bedrooms in Allsop Paragon, where the landlord wore a peacock's feather behind each of his ears, and went about the house crowing and flapping his arms: suffice it to say, that the residence Mr Poppet chose at last was No. 19. W.

It was situated in a pretty fashionable street, running directly into Hyde Park, where first-floor apartments were, upon the average, three guineas a week. The drawing-room and back drawing-room of No. 19 were elegantly and expensively furnished; the sleeping-rooms, though bare, were sufficiently large; and the rent was only two guineas. Everything, however, was excessively dirty, including Mrs A., the landlady. Her complexion was cream-colour, sprinkled with yellow spots; her hair, which should have been gray, was whity-brown; and the hue of her gown quite indescribable: it neither reached high enough nor low enough, nor was it ever changed for another during our protracted residence in her apartments. My husband informed her that I was excessively particular about cleanliness, for which she expressed herself truly thankful; 'for, sir, I do assure you, with *me* it comes next to godliness;' and it may have done that, perhaps, in Mrs A.'s case, without inciting her to become of alabaster purity. She promised Mr Poppet to have a good wash out; each article of furniture should be accurately dusted, and everything made spick and span for our arrival. We called a week afterwards, and found seven days extra dirt upon No. 19 and its inhabitants, and were assured that the work of reformation was to be begun that afternoon. We called again next day, when Mrs A. immediately set to work to dust the knocker, as though that were the sole appurtenance to No. 19 still left unmirrorlike and spotless. When, after many injunctions on the one side, and promises on the other, we arrived at last with baggage and baby, as tenants, we found all things in primal chaos, with the kitchen-fire out, and no milk in the house for our beloved infant. Retreat, alas, was become impossible; and indeed we had cut it off ourselves by a remonstrance, ending with a policeman, with the cormorants in Porchester Oblong.

The domestic of No. 19 at that epoch—the first of eleven Marys who trusted for a greater or less time to the empty promises to pay of Mrs A.—was rather a pretty young person, and a good deal cleaner than her mistress, but so hopelessly stupid, that upon being desired to fetch a cab for Mr Poppet precisely at 2 P.M., she brought up at that hour a pair of lighted candles, as though he were about to conjure, read Shakspeare publicly, or perform high-mass. It was her custom also to put letters intrusted to her for the post into any chink or box which offered itself out of doors, especially any that had *Letters* on it, in the simple faith that that was all Mr Rowland Hill required of her. There was also a Miss A., of ten years old or so, residing at No. 19 with her mamma; but she was a lily of the field, and toiled for nobody; nay, the one domestic was principally occupied in waiting upon her, in curling her hair, and getting her up generally, in order that she might apply herself, in correct drawing costume, to the piano. Yes, Miss Euphemia had a voice, as we well knew—was intended, as Mrs A. confided to me, for the Opera; 'my only objection being, ma'am, that I am told it is not a good profession for the soul.' Extreme simplicity, indeed, would seem to come next to cleanliness in the scale of this lady's virtues, and next to that, perhaps, truth. She would appeal to Heaven upon the very slightest provocation, to excuse her omission to make a pudding, or to account for the absence of sippets from a hash. All day long, we could hear her solemnly protesting to tradespeople and others at the door of No. 19, that she had not got one penny in the house, but that next week, as sure as there was a sun in the sky, their demands should be satisfied in full. She made no sort of difference in this formula, whether we had just settled with her for her week's account or not; and it is my firm belief that she never paid any one of them for anything. I had to go out for the barest necessaries of life myself, not even the milkman consenting to send round to No. 19 without the express understanding that the provision was for the lodgers, and not for Mrs A. 'Why, ma'am,' said he, 'that 'ooman might have bathed in the milk I've sent her these last six months, without my seeing the colour of her money;' and certainly he could scarcely have selected a more awful image by which to have expressed his feelings. When, indeed, the claims of her landlord and her daughter's singing-master had been satisfied, I don't suppose that poor Mrs A. had really much money to spare, and, of course, under these circumstances, she could do no less than live upon us. She had taken No. 19 upon spec. of a gentleman (Mr B.), who rented it upon spec. of a certain lady (Mrs C.), who had furnished it upon spec., and never paid a shilling to the original proprietor (Mr D.), who had built the house upon spec., and was now at Boulogne. Neither A. nor B., nor C. nor D., had any money at all, I think, but were entirely dependent upon P. (the Poppets) for existence.

Mrs C. (who once called upon Mrs A. in company with a gentleman in a Hansom cab, with the hopeless intention of getting a five-pound note out of her), by whose elegant, and somewhat expensive taste the furniture had been chosen, had herself resided at No. 19 as long as she could get provisions upon credit, and had been succeeded by Mr D., who had done the same; so that not only was the bell of No. 19 a good deal pulled, and the knocker considerably worked—they came with a rap, but went away without one—but also, in the course of the four-and-twenty hours, expostulation, and even direct menace, floated up to the drawing-room floor in ceaseless waves. It may seem strange that we should have put up with inconvenience of this kind for a single week; but the fact was, that Mr Poppet and myself and the baby, had suffered such incredible things at the hands of lodging-house keepers, that we had fallen into a sort of torpor of despair. Therefore, although a good deal alarmed and frightened, I did not rush out of the house at once, on the occasion when Mrs A. enticed me into her bedroom in the attics, and there exhibited a chestful of the most extraordinary and suspicious splendours—beautiful laces, heaps of cashmere shawls, necklaces of diamonds, jewels of every sort and kind, to be offered to me, as a valued friend, at what were certainly exceedingly low prices. She told me a strange story of her having once been lady's-maid to a person of fashion, and that confidence having been reposed in her by many females of high rank, they now intrusted her with these valuables to sell for them, they being more in want of the money than the goods, which, however, looked quite unworn and new. It was not a satisfactory account of the things, certainly; but a peril which befell our own goods and chattels about this time, drove Mrs A.'s secret treasure quite out of my recollection. This was no less than a menace on the part of Mr D. to put an execution into No. 19, unless his rent was paid. Mr B., it seems, had been trying the screw upon our spotted landlady with as little effect as Mrs C.'s mechanical endeavours had had upon him, for a considerable period; and the poor gentleman at Boulogne could make nothing out of his house whatever. We received this information from one of the many domestics whom Mrs A. had cajoled out of their gratuitous services; and it being further corroborated by the good lady's most solemn denial, I sent off Mr Poppet to see Mr D.'s lawyer in Bedford Row. My beloved husband is not very much used to business transactions, and he returned home, after some hours, in a most miserable condition. He had entirely failed in persuading the legal gentleman—who appears to have been rather deaf and excessively obstinate—that he was not B. or some other defaulter connected with No. 19. He said we could expect no mercy after such conduct as ours had been, and that nothing would be secured to us except our wearing apparel. I packed up what little plate we had at once, and took that and my dressing-case, with a moderator-lamp and a bran-new silk umbrella, to a friend's, for safety. When I had done that, and not before, I began to listen to Mrs A.'s expostulations upon the folly of apprehending such a thing as a distress-warrant in *her* house, when she had L.500 worth of property under the bed in her room, let alone as much again behind the wainscot in the back dining-parlour. I am not sure, indeed, whether her riches or her poverty made us the most uncomfortable. In the daytime, the house was besieged by importunate creditors, and in the evening and late into the night, haunted by mustached gentlemen of foreign appearance, and very much shawled, who had, I suppose, jewellery business to transact with Mrs A. A magnificently attired lady of some fifty years of age having called upon one occasion, and had a most stormy interview, I animadverted, after her departure, upon the disturbance so respectable-looking a person had created.

'Lor, ma'am,' explained her opponent, 'how deceived you be, to be sure. Now, have you never heard, about twelve or one o'clock, a party a-singing and a-hollering up our street?'

'Yes,' said I, 'I have, and it's very disagreeable.'

'Well, ma'am, now, that party is the same party—the very same;' which information was accompanied by a telegraphic signal indicating that the party drank a little.

I began to feel very uncomfortable in No. 19 by this time; was convinced that people were about the house at night, and sent Mr Poppet out to look with a revolver, more than once, locking the bedroom door after him very carefully. He, however, manlike, having chosen the lodgings, determined upon the whole to like them; and I don't know but that we should have been there now, except for this.

One day we went out, baby and all, to dinner in the neighbourhood; and while we were enjoying that repast in the parlour, our nursery-maid received a rather startling piece of information in the kitchen.

'A pretty house your master and mistress have got into at last!' observed the footman.

'Well, I don't know,' replied Sara, who is quite impervious to satire. 'I call it excessively dirty, at all events.'

'*That* ain't the worst,' said Thomas: '*it's the West End receiving-house for stolen goods!*'

Whether it really was so or not, or how Thomas got to know it, I can't tell; but by the next afternoon we had everything packed and in a cab for instant departure. Nobody had certainly entered the house that morning; but as I raised my eyes, by no means regretfully, to the first-floor windows, without doubt I saw a gentleman standing there, in our own drawing-room, with mustaches, of foreign appearance, and very much shawled. Mr Poppet wanted to run in again and demand an explanation; but 'no,' said I, 'certainly not. You're sure to see it all some day in the police reports; and nobody belonging to me shall ever cross the threshold of No. 19. W. again.'

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

In the days of the Regency, men had never heard the maxim that the right man should be put in the right place, and it does not strike us as at all out of character with the time, that Jekyll, the celebrated wit, when asked how it happened that he of all others was chosen to fill the responsible post of Master in Chancery, should have replied: 'Because he was the most unfit man in the country.' Since then, however, the public has grown more enlightened; and though, as we shall presently see, the schoolmaster is not everywhere abroad, at least in the sense which Lord Brougham intended when he first gave currency to the phrase, it is beginning to be thought that aspirants, even to government offices, should be to some extent possessed of the necessary qualifications for performing their daily routine of work with credit to themselves, and without bringing the public service into contempt. Mr Jekyll, it is true, got through his duties without any notable break-down. Lord Eldon, who had for a long time refused to make the appointment, but who was at length forced into it by the Prince Regent, used to say it was his very ignorance that saved him; had he only possessed that dangerous thing, a 'little learning,' he would probably have persisted in applying it without regard to consequences, but, as it was, he was forced to take the advice of his brother-masters, to whose superior knowledge he had sense enough to defer.

However unsatisfactory this way of getting through business may seem to common-sense people, it is pretty clear that it is still relied on both by candidates and by patrons to a startling extent. We do not know how matters stand at present with regard to Masters in Chancery or Lords of the Treasury; there is as yet, we believe, no examination for them to go through; but as regards the lower ranks, we have the best authority for what we say. The second Report of the Civil Service Commissioners is now before us, and the information it contains appears worthy of general and serious attention. It could hardly have been supposed, nor would it be easy to believe on any slight authority, that out of the entire number of persons who, having received nominations to government appointments between the 21st of May 1855, and the 31st of December 1856, were examined under the authority of the Civil

Service Commissioners, the number so examined, exclusive of competitions, being 2853, no less than 425 were rejected for egregious blunders in spelling alone, or for blunders in spelling combined with blunders in other subjects except arithmetic; that 147 were rejected for arithmetic, either alone or with other subjects except spelling; and 243 for spelling and arithmetic, with or without other subjects. It must be understood that in all these cases the gross ignorance of the candidates in either spelling or arithmetic, acquirements which do not seem to point to an unreasonably high standard, would have afforded a sufficient, or rather an imperative reason for rejection, even had they come up to the mark in other respects.

The total number of rejected candidates being 880, it will be seen, by adding the above numbers, that only 65 were turned back on other grounds, such as insufficient proof of character, not coming within the limits of age, or want of acquaintance with special subjects required in their departments. What appears particularly strange is, that the proportion of rejections increases. The number per cent. in 1855 was 29·5, and in 1856, 38·8. The Commissioners assure us that, as a general rule, their examinations have not in the slightest degree increased in stringency, so as to account for the increase, though they admit that to a small extent it may be ascribed to the undue strictness of provincial examiners, in the case of candidates for the office of expectant of excise. To prevent any possible occurrence of this kind in future, the Commissioners have arranged to send examination-papers from their own office, precisely similar to those used with candidates examined there, and the answers will be returned to them for adjudication, so that candidates examined in the provinces will stand in the same position as those examined in London.

It does not appear to us that any person holding a government situation, even in the subordinate ranks, can properly get through his duties if he is not well up in ordinary arithmetic, if he cannot read manuscript with tolerable correctness, or if his spelling is ludicrously bad. But we should not have felt so much surprise, nor would it have betrayed the existence of so low a standard in the Civil Service, had the rejections on these grounds been confined to such officers as tide-waiters, expectants of excise, letter-carriers, and messengers; but it appears from an appendix to the Report that no less than 198 of the higher class—that is, would-be clerks at Whitehall, at Somerset House, at the Post-office, in the War and other departments—were found grossly deficient in spelling. In transcribing the brief, and by no means difficult, orthographical paper set before these aspirants, sixteen made 16 mistakes; fifteen made 17 mistakes; thirteen made 18; eight made 19; eleven made 21; and the Commissioners kindly provide us with a table ascending in the scale of ignorance, which shews, among other high numbers, that three made 46 mistakes; two, 49; three, 54; one, 68; one, 75; while one gentleman, who was nominated to a clerkship in the Post-office, stands *facile princeps* at the head of all, being distinguished as the perpetrator of no less than 142 outrageous blunders! We can fancy his astonishment on discovering that the Commissioners declined to give him a certificate, for of course he was much too obtuse to discern his own shortcomings. He probably wrote about his disaster to a former school-companion something after this fashion:

'My dear Charls—I promised to wright and let you know when I wost fixed in the situtation were Mr Wiseacre our Parliment represtative got me apointed a clarke, but now it his very diffirent intellegence I have to send, for I wost broght up before two gents who began to aske all manner of things and put me to wright down I don't know how many answers. Yet would you supose it, after I answered all thier questions they refused to receommend me. I wass to had three long sums all full of farthings and I did them all, but I cant tell why the gent when he took the paper should have opened his eyes so very wide. Then I was to put down who deafeated the Spannish Armada. Of course I could tell them it was Lord Marborough. I did not learn history for nothing at Mr Muddler's as he knows well enough for he allways said I was a credit to his sistem. I told them all about gui Fawks and that Henry the Eight married Lady Jane Grey, and that the Roman walls in England were built to keep the Tartars out and that the battle of Culloden wass fought between the Earl of Lester and Edward the Fourth. I wonder they did not aske the differance between the House of Lawds and the House of Piers, or who were the wigs and the Torys, as though we where not polititions in our town as well as London.

'They asked what was a cheif town on the Ryne, so I told them Marselles as you may think. Then they broght a map of England whiout any place down on it, which I wost to fill up. Didn't I do it like fun? The gent said I had done it upside down, but how could that be for I put in all the counties and their wasn't any room left. They thought I dare say that I should be catched, but they were greadley mistaken. I am not so difficient as that comes to, but I know my suspission is write, that they were preprosessed, and jelous of what I new for fear I should take the shine out of thier own freinds. I supose they must want to keep the vacantcy for some of ther own famely, but if they do it is a most purnitious and unscrupolus buisness. It would serve them just write to right to the Times and give them what they deserve for ther inflakible riggour, and that is to be made an exampel of. If you should see the paper at the Warrick Arms, just look out, for I'm detirmined to tell pepell what I did and how they served me, and if my letter dose not propperley astonish pholispers, patrotes, miniteress, and these gents too with there predudices and perfidity then I am not

Yours sincerly
GUSTAVIUS CEASAR TUBBS.'[*]

Some curious reflections are suggested by the case of our friend Tubbs, which gives something like an indication of the way in which government situations were formerly filled. There was little, or rather, in point of fact, nothing to prevent unqualified nominees in most cases from stepping quietly into their berths; but how in the name of wonder did public business get on with the Tubbses to take care of it? At least three clerks must have been required to do the work of two, besides an additional superior functionary to correct the blunders of his subordinates. We see, likewise, that the standard of education among the classes who look to mercantile and other situations for a maintenance, is far from what it should be; and that many young men of perhaps fair natural ability may be kept in the background all their lives, for want of a tolerably sound school-training in their earlier years.

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[*] Although this is an imaginary letter, the blunders are really those made by the candidates.

Arithmetic is another great point with the Commissioners, who say that they find no difficulty in ascertaining the fitness or unfitness of a candidate in this respect. Candidates for the lower offices, such as tide-waiter and letter-carrier, are expected to know the four ordinary rules, besides money, weights, and measures; but the examples set before them are of the simplest character, so that if they fail, it can only be by a most discreditable want of knowledge. 'In no case do the arithmetical questions which are required to be answered, even by candidates for the higher class of junior situations, reach beyond vulgar and decimal fractions, and it is our wish and intention that they should present to the candidate nothing of a puzzling character, but that they should be just sufficient to ascertain whether he understands the principle and is acquainted with the practice in the portion of arithmetic to which the questions belong.' Yet 390 candidates, during little more than a year and a half, were so deficient in this branch of education, that they would have been rejected on this ground alone, even though they had satisfied the examiners in other things.

The third great requirement of the Commissioners is good handwriting, and in this respect they repeat what they stated last year, that they very rarely find a candidate who comes up to their ideal of a good hand, and that, although they discern considerable improvement, they are still under the necessity of keeping the standard of handwriting low, especially as regards the inferior offices. Some departments, however, insist strongly on the importance of good writing, and on one occasion the Commissioners felt themselves bound to reject a candidate for a clerkship 'in an important department,' on account of bad handwriting, although he would otherwise have been successful.

It is only under peculiar circumstances, or in cases of extreme ignorance, that a candidate is rejected for want of knowledge in the higher branches of education. In English composition—meaning by that term, the ability to relate with fluency and distinctness some circumstance with which the writer is acquainted—the Commissioners have found themselves obliged to be extremely lenient. They say that, 'knowing the limited time and attention which is given to the acquirement of English composition in the schools of this country, we have considered that it is only especial ignorance displayed in this branch of examination which could justify us in treating it as a cause of rejection.' This is true to a serious extent: it may be doubted whether a dozen youths out of a hundred on leaving school, could accomplish an ordinary business-letter.

In history, which is one of the subjects intended to test the general education and intelligence of the candidate, the Commissioners have found it necessary to be very moderate in their demands. 'Some cases have occurred in which the display of almost total ignorance of history, combined with indifferent performance in some other subject or subjects, has led us to the conclusion of the candidate's unfitness. And there are also other cases in which a candidate would probably have been rejected in history, had not his case been decided on the ground of deficiency in the elementary subjects; but in no case whatever have we founded our rejection of a candidate upon history alone.'

In addition to the peculiar views of English history recorded in the epistle of our friend Tubbs, there are others not less remarkable to be met with in a note to the Commissioners' Report. Some of the candidates gave such answers as these—namely, That trials of ordeal were employed in the trial of Warren Hastings, and were legally prohibited in the reign of George I.; that George II. is the sovereign to whom the name of the English Justinian has been sometimes applied; that 'William the Conqueror was a king who introduced many good laws into England; learning and all sorts of science flourishing under him;' that the great plot which was discovered in the year 1678 was the South-sea scheme; that William Wallace invaded England in the reign of Henry VIII.; that the battle of Marston Moor was fought between Bruce and Edward IV.; that in the Seven Years' War the Danes were opposed to the Britons in consequence of the massacre of the former, Sweyn gaining the victory, and being crowned king of England; that the Thirty Years' War was that between England and America; that the Scots were defeated at Bannockburn; and much more in the same style. Of geography, as little seems to be known as of history. The Alps are placed in Hungary, Swansea at Norwich, and Germany in the Caspian Sea. The Thames is made to rise in the German Ocean, and Zante is said to be the kingdom most recently added to Europe.

Notwithstanding all this, however, the Commissioners state—and in justice to those candidates who have been successful, it ought to be remembered, 'that great numbers of the candidates who have succeeded in obtaining certificates have passed very creditable examinations, and have shewn themselves thoroughly acquainted with the prescribed branches of knowledge. We believe, too, that we can safely assert that a larger proportion of persons have passed such creditable examinations during this year, than during the preceding period of our existence.'

We are rather sorry to find that the Commissioners continue to indicate a decided leaning in favour of the competitive system. In the case of a competitive examination for clerkships in their own department, they tell us, with evident satisfaction, that twenty-five out of forty-six candidates had finished their education at one or other of the universities, one having been a Cambridge wrangler; and that of the remainder, sixteen were educated at one or other of the great grammar-schools. As an exceptional thing, this sort of election may answer very well, and may do good service to young men of ability who lack interest to obtain an absolute nomination; but if the system were to become general, the result could obviously be no other than that of leading to a disproportionate expense in education, which, in the case of persons of limited means, would operate to the detriment of other members of the family. If competition were universal, it is clear that no one could rely on obtaining a situation of L.100 a year if his friends had not been at a ruinous expense in maintaining him at college to learn things which, the examination once over, would make him no pecuniary return. It is not likely, however, that the competitive system will be extended greatly beyond its present limits, so that there is really nothing to restrict our satisfaction at the result of the Commissioners' labours. The public service can no longer be made contemptible by the intrusion of illiterate officials, and young men of tolerable ability and fair acquirements will no longer find themselves thrown in the background by the school-dunce.

Parents and guardians may derive many useful hints from this Report; and schoolmasters will perhaps learn the propriety of giving their pupils a sound practical training in those departments which cannot be neglected without serious results. So large a proportion of the middle-classes looks to public and commercial appointments for a maintenance, that the means by which they may be honourably obtained are amongst the most important of social questions. Much vexation has, we doubt not, been caused where candidates have been rejected on the ground of ignorance, and many families have learned, when too late, that political interest without personal qualifications will no longer avail: but a great public good has been accomplished; and we hope that future aspirants will take the warning which is so forcibly given by previous failures, and endeavour by home-studies to make up for any deficiencies in their school-learning.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A DECLARATION ON HORSEBACK.

Face to face with my beautiful brunette. Her eyes fell upon me in an expression of surprise. I felt abashed by the glance; my conduct was not *en règle.* I bethought me of an apology. What excuse could I offer for such unceremonious intrusion? Accident? She would not believe it; the time and the place were against such a supposition. With an intellect like hers, it would be idle to adopt so shallow an artifice. No; I would not dissemble; I would boldly avow the truth. Jealousy had rendered me reckless of the result.

'*Adios, cavallero!*' said she, interrupting my hurried reflections. '*Carrambo!* where is your guide? How have you found this place?'

'Easily enough, señorita; I followed the tracks of your horse.'

'But so soon—I did not expect you'——

'No; you expected another?'

'Certainly. I thought Cyprio would arrive before you'——

'Cyprio!'

'Cyprio—yes, Cyprio.'

'Señorita! if this be another name for your Protean cousin, I have to say it will be better for him he should not arrive at all.'

'My cousin?—better not arrive? Holy Trinity, capitan! I do not comprehend you!'

Her large brown eyes were rolling in astonishment. I was as much puzzled as she, but I had begun my explanation, and was determined to carry it to the end.

'Then, Señorita de Vargas, I shall be more explicit. If Rafael Ijurra appear upon this ground, either he or I leaves it not alive. He has attempted my life, and I have vowed to take his, whenever and wherever I may meet him.'

'Pray heaven you may keep your vow!'

'Your cousin?'

'My cousin—Rafael Ijurra—my worst foe—the direst enemy of our house!'

'Ha! but were you not awaiting him?'

'Awaiting *him!* Ha, ha, ha! No. Little timid though I be, I should not desire to be here alone with Rafael Ijurra.'

'Lady! you astonish me; pray explain'——

'*Por dios!* gallant capitan, 'tis you who need explain. I sought this interview to thank you for your noble gift. You meet me with anger in your eye, and bitter words upon your tongue.'

'You sought this interview?—say you so, lady?'

'Certainly I did. For reasons already known to you, I dared not invite you to our house; so I have chosen this pretty glade for my drawing-room. How do you like it, cavallero?'

'In your society, señorita, the rudest spot would appear a paradise.'

'Again the poet's tongue! Ah, capitan, remember the yellow domino! No more flattery, I pray; we are no longer *en masque.* Face to face, let us be candid with each other.'

'With all my heart I accept the conditions. Candour is the very thing I desire, for, to say the truth, I came prepared for a confession.'

'A confession!'

'Precisely so; but since you are an advocate for candour, may I first ask a question?'

'Ho! you wish to play the confessor with me?'

'I do, señorita.'

'Bravo, capitan! Proceed! I shall answer you in all sincerity.'

'Then, lady, what I would ask—Who is this Cyprio whom you expected?'

'Cyprio! Ha, ha, ha! Who should Cyprio be but my mozo; he who carried my message to you. Why do you put such a question?'

'He who carried your message to me?'

'Of course. Yonder is the *muchacho* himself. Hola, Cyprio! you may return to the house. *Carrambo,* capitan! both he and you must have sped well. I did not expect you for half an hour; but you soldiers are soon in the saddle. So much the better, for it is getting late, and I have a great deal to say to you.'

A light had broken upon me. 'Twas Cyprio I had passed in the forest shade; the boy was the bearer of a message—hence his having hailed me. 'Twas I who was expected to keep the assignation; 'twas I for whom the timepiece had been consulted—for whom those earnest glances had been given! The bitter moments were past, and my heart swelled anew with proud and pleasant emotions.

As yet she knew not that I had come without invitation. Cyprio, at the word of command, had gone off without making any reply, and my prompt appearance upon the ground was left unexplained.

I was about to account for it, and offer some apology for my brusque behaviour, when I was challenged to the confession I had just promised.

Minor thoughts gave way before the important purpose I had formed, and to which the banter now recalled me. So fair an opportunity might never offer again. In the vicissitudes of a soldier's life, the chance of to-day should not be disregarded—to-morrow may bring change either in the scene or the circumstances; and I was skilled enough in love-lore to know that an hour unimproved is often followed by an age of regrets.

But, in truth, I do some wrong to my character; I was but little under the influence of such cunning cognizance at that moment. I acted not by volition, but rather under pressure of a passion that held complete mastery over my will, and compelled me to the declaration I was about to make.

It was simple enough—three little words in either of the two sweet tongues in which we understood each other. I chose the one—of all others most attuned to the tones of the loving heart—and bending low to that fair face, and gazing into the liquid depths of those large inquiring eyes, I whispered the sweet, though oft-repeated phrase:

'*Yo te amo.*'

The words quivered upon my lips, but their tone proved the sincerity in which I had spoken. No doubt it was further manifest by the earnestness of my manner as I awaited her reply.

The habitual smile had departed from her lips; the damask red deepened and rose higher upon her cheeks; the dark fringes drooped downward, and half-concealed the burning orbs beneath: the face of the gay girl had suddenly assumed the serious air of womanhood.

At first, I was terrified by the expression, and could scarcely control my dread; but I drew hope from the flushed cheek, the roseate neck, the swelling panting bosom. Emotions were stirring in that breast. Oh, what emotions! will she not speak? Will she not declare them?

There was a long interval of silence—to me, it seemed an age.

'Señor,' she said at length—'twas the first time I had heard that voice tremble—'Señor, you promised to be candid; you have been so: are you equally *sincere?*'

'I have spoken from the depth of my soul.'

The long lashes were raised, and the love-light gleamed from her liquid eyes; for a moment it burned steadily, bathing my heart as with balm. Heaven itself could not have shed a brighter beam upon my spirit.

All at once a smile played upon her features, in which I detected, or fancied so, the gay *insouciance* that springs from indifference. To me it was another moment of pain. She continued:

'And, pray, capitan, what would you have me do?'

I felt embarrassed, and replied not.

'Would you have me declare that I love you?'

'Oh! you cannot—you do not'——

'You have not asked the question!'

'No, lady. I dreaded the answer.'

'Ho! what a coward you have grown of late! A pity I am not masked. Shall I draw this veil? Ha, ha, ha!'

It was not the manner of love. Love laughs not. My heart was heavy; I made no reply, but with eyes upon the ground, sat in my saddle, feeling like one condemned.

For some moments her laughter rang in my ears, as I fancied, in mockery. The sweet silvery voice only grated upon my heart. Oh, that I had never listened to its siren tones!

I heard the hoof-stroke of her horse; and, looking up, saw that she was moving away from the spot. Was she going to leave me thus?

She spurred towards the centre of the glade, where the ground was higher, and there again pulled up.

'Come hither, cavallero!' she cried, beckoning to me with her small gloved hand.

Mechanically, I rode up to the spot.

'So, gallant capitan! you who are brave enough to meet a score of foes, have not the courage to ask a woman if she loves you!'

A dismal smile was my only reply to this bitter badinage.

'Ah! capitan,' she continued, 'I will not believe it; ere now you have put that dreaded interrogatory—often, I fear too often.'

I looked at her with surprise. There was a touch of bitterness in the tone. The gay smile was gone; her eyelids drooped; her look was turned upon the ground.

Was this real, or only a seeming? the prelude to some abrupt antithesis? some fresh outburst of satire?

'Señorita!' said I, 'the hypothesis, whether true or false, can have but little interest for you.'

She answered me with a smile of strange intelligence. I fancied there was sadness in it. I fancied——

'We cannot recover the past,' said she, interrupting my thoughts; 'no, no, no! But for the present—say again—tell me again that you love me!'

'Love you!—yes, lady'——

'And I have your heart, your whole heart?'

'Never—can I love another!'

'Thanks! thanks!'

'No more than thanks, Isolina?'

For some moments she remained silent, her eyes averted from me; she appeared struggling with some emotion.

'Yes, more than thanks,' she replied at length; 'three things more—if they will suffice to prove my gratitude.'

'Name them!'

'Why should prudery tie my tongue? I promised to be candid. I too came here to make confession. Listen! Three things I have said. Look around you!—north, south, east, and west—the land you see is mine; be it yours, if you will.'

'Isolina!'

'This, too, can I bestow'—she held forth her little hand, which I clasped with fervid emotion.

'And the third?'

'The third, on second thoughts, I cannot give; 'tis yours already.'

'It is ——?'

'*Mia corazon*' (My heart).

Those splendid steeds, like creatures of intelligence, appeared to understand what was said; they had gradually moved closer and closer, till their muzzles touched and their steel curbs rang together. At the last words, they came side by side, as if yoked in a chariot. It appeared delight to them to press their proud heaving flanks against each other, while their riders, closing in mutual clasp, leaned over and met their lips in that wild fervid kiss which forms the climax of love.

CHAPTER XLVII.

STRAYED FROM THE TRACK.

We parted upon the top of the hill; it was not prudent for us to be seen together. Isolina rode away first, leaving me in the glade. We bade adieu in that phrase of pleasant promise, '*hasta la mañana*' (until to-morrow). To-morrow we should meet again. To-morrow, and to-morrow, we should visit that sweet spot, repeat our burning words, renew our blissful vows.

I remained some minutes on the ground, now hallowed and holy. Within, the tumult of triumphant passion had passed, and was succeeded by the calm repose of perfect contentment. My heart's longings had been gratified; it had found all that it desired—even to the full reciprocity of its passion. What would it more? There is no more of mundane bliss. Life has no felicity to cope with requited love; it alone can give us a foretaste of future joys; by it only may we form some idea of the angel existence of heaven.

The world without was in harmony with the spirit within. The scene around me was rose-colour. The flowers appeared fresher in tint, and breathed a sweeter fragrance in the air; the hum of the homeward bee, laden with treasures for his love-queen, fell with a dreamy pleasance upon the ear; the voices of the birds sounded softer and more musical; even the *aras* and paroquets, chanting in a more subdued tone, no longer pronounced that hated name; and the tiny Mexican doves—*las palomitas*, scarcely so large as finches—walked with proud gait over the ground, or side by side upon the branches of the myrtles—like types of tender love—told their heart's tale in soft and amorous cooing.

Long could I have lingered by that consecrated spot, even *hasta la mañana*, but duty claimed me, and its calls must not be disregarded. Already the setting sun was flinging purple beams over the distant prairie; and, heading my horse down the hill, I once more plunged under the shadows of the mimosas.

Absorbed in my supreme happiness, I took no heed of aught else; I noticed neither track nor path.

Had I left my horse to himself, most likely he would have taken the right road; but in my reverie, perhaps I had mechanically dragged upon the rein, and turned him from it. Whether or not, after a lapse of time, I found myself in the midst of thick woods, with not the semblance of a trail to guide me; and I knew not whether I was riding in the right direction. I ought rather to say that I knew the contrary—else I should long since have reached the clearings around the village.

Without much reflection, I turned in a new direction, and rode for some time without striking a trail. This led me once more into doubt, and I made head back again, but still without success. I was in a forest-plain, but I could find no path leading anywhere; and amid the underwood of palmettoes I could not see any great distance around me. Beyond a question, I had strayed far out of my way.

At an early hour of the day, this would have given me little concern; but the sun had now set, and already, under the shadow of the moss-covered trees, it was nearly dark. Night would be down in a few minutes, and in all probability I should be obliged to spend it in the forest—by no means an agreeable prospect, and the less so that I was thinly clad and hungry. True, I might pass some hours in sweet reflection upon the pleasant incident of the day—I might dream rosy dreams—but, alas! the soul is sadly under the influence of the body; the spiritual must ever yield to the physical, and even love itself becomes a victim to the vulgar appetite of hunger.

I began to fear that, after all, I should have but a sorry night of it. I should be too hungry to think; too cold either to sleep or dream; besides, I was likely to get wet to the shirt: the rain had commenced falling in large heavy drops.

After another unsuccessful effort to strike a trail, I pulled up and sat listening. My eyes would no longer avail me; perhaps my ears might do better service.

And so it chanced. The report of a rifle reached them, apparently fired some hundred yards off in the woods.

Considering that I was upon hostile ground, such a sound might have caused me alarm; but I knew from the sharp whip-like crack that the piece was a hunter's rifle, and no Mexican ever handled a gun of that kind. Moreover, I had heard, closely following upon the shot, a dull concussion, as of some heavy body dropped from a high elevation to the ground. I was hunter enough to know the signification of this sound. It was the game—bird or beast—that had fallen to the bullet.

An American must have fired that shot; but who? There were only three or four of the rangers who carried the hunter-rifle—a very different weapon from the 'regulation' piece—old backwoodsmen who had been indulged in their whim. It might be one of these.

Without hesitation, I headed my horse for the spot, and rode as rapidly as the underwood would permit me. I certainly must have passed the place where the shot had been fired, and yet I saw no one; but just as I was about to pull up again, a well-known voice reached me from behind with the words:

'Jumpin Geehosophat! it ur the young fellur!'

Turning, I beheld my trapper comrades just emerging from the bushes, where they had cautiously *cachéd* on hearing the hoof-strokes of my horse.

Rube carried upon his shoulders a large turkey gobbler—the game I had heard drop—while upon Garey's back I observed the choice portions of a deer.

'You have been foraging to some advantage,' I remarked as they came up.

'Yes, capt'n,' replied Garey, '*we* won't want for rashuns. Not but that your rangers offered us a plenty to eat; but ye see we couldn't in honour accept o' it, for we promised to find for ourselves.'

'Ye-es, durn it!' added Rube, 'we're free mountainee men—ain't a gwine to sponge on nobody—we ain't.'

'An, capt'n,' continued Garey, 'thar don't appear to be any great eatin fixins about the place for yurself neyther: if yu'll just accept o' the turkey, an one o' these hyar quarters o' the deer-meat, thar's plenty left for Rube an me; ain't thar, Rube?'

'Gobs!' was the laconic answer.

I was not loath to satisfy the wish of the hunters—for to say the truth, the village larder had no such delicacies as either wild turkey or venison—and having signified my assent, we all three moved away from the spot. With the trappers for my guides, I should soon get into the right road. They, too, were on their return to the post. They had been in the woods since noon. They were both afoot, having left their horses at the rancheria.

After winding about half a mile among the trees, we came out upon a narrow road; here my companions, who were unacquainted with the neighbourhood, were at fault as well as myself; they knew not which direction to take. It was dark as pitch, but, as on the night before, there was lightning at intervals. Unlike the preceding night, however, it was now raining as if all the sluices of the sky had been set open; and by this time we were all three of us soaking wet. The whole canopy of heaven was shrouded in black, without a single streak of light upon it—not even a star. Who could discover the direction in such a night?

As the lightning flashed, I saw Rube bending down over the road; he appeared to be examining the tracks. I noticed that there were wheel-tracks—deep ruts—evidently made by the rude block-wheels of a *carreta.* It was these that the trapper was scanning.

Almost as soon as a man could have read the direction from a finger-post, Rube raised himself erect, and crying out:

'All right—this-away!' set off along the road.

I was curious to know how he had determined the point, and questioned him.

'Wal, yur see, young fellur, it ur the trail o' a Mexikin cart; an anybody as iver seed thet ur vamint, knows it hez got only two wheels. But thur are four tracks hyur, an thurfor the cart must a gone back an fo'th, for I seed they wur the same set o' wheels. Now, 'tur raizonable to s'pose thet the back-track leads to the settlements, an thet's this-away.'

'But how could you tell which was the back-track?'

'Wagh! thet ur easy as fallin off a log. The back-track ur the fresher by more'n a kupple o' hours.'

Pondering upon the singular 'instinct' that enabled our guide to distinguish the tracks, I rode on in silence.

Shortly after, I again heard the voice of Rube, who was some paces in the advance.

'I kud a knowd the way,' he said, 'ithout the wheel-tracks: they only made things more sartint sure.'

'How?' I asked. 'What other clue had you?'

'The water,' replied he; ''ee see, or 'ee mout, ef you'd a looked into the tracks, thet it ur runnin this-away. Do 'ee hear thet thur?'

I listened. I heard distinctly the sound of running water, as of a small stream carried down a rough rocky channel.

'Yes—I hear it.'

'Wal,' continued the trapper, 'it ur a branch made by the rain: we're a follerin it *down;* an thurfor must kum to the river jest whur we want to git. Onceet thur, we'll soon find our way, I reck'n. Wagh! how the durned rain kums down! It 'ud drown a muss-rat. Wagh!'

The result proved the trapper's reasoning correct. The road-water was running in the direction we had taken; and shortly after, the brawling branch shot out from among the bushes, and crossed our path, diverging from it at an acute angle. We could see, however, as we plunged through the now swollen streamlet, that the current, in its general direction, was the same with our road: it would certainly guide us to the river.

It did so. Half a mile further on we came out upon its banks, and struck the main road leading to the rancheria.

A few minutes' brisk travelling carried us to the outskirts of the village, when we were all three brought to a sudden halt by the sharp hail of the sentry, who called out the usual interrogatory:

'Who goes there?'

'Friends!' I replied; ''tis you, Quackenboss?' I had recognised the voice of the soldier-botanist, and under the lightning, saw him standing by the trunk of a tree.

'Halt! Give the countersign!' was the response in a firm determined tone.

I did not know this masonic pass-word. On riding out, I had not thought of such a thing, and I began to anticipate some trouble. I resolved, however, to make trial of the sentry.

'I haven't got the countersign. 'Tis I, Quackenboss. I am'——

I announced my name and rank.

'Don't care for all that!' was the somewhat surly rejoinder; 'can't pass 'ithout the countersign.'

'Yer durned fool! it's yur captin,' cried Rube, in a peevish tone.

'May be,' replied the imperturbable sentry; 'can't let him pass 'ithout countersign.'

I now saw that we were in a real dilemma.

'Send for the corporal of the guard, or either of the lieutenants,' I suggested, thinking that that might be the shortest way to get out of it.

'Hain't got nobody to send,' came the gruff voice of Quackenboss from out the darkness.

'I'll go!' promptly answered Garey—the big trapper thinking, in his innocence, there could be no reason why *he* should not carry the message to quarters—and as he spoke, he made a step or two forward in the direction of the sentinel.

'Halt there!' thundered the voice of Quackenboss; 'halt! another step, and I'll plug you with a bullet.'

'What's thet? plug he sez?' screamed Rube, leaping to the front. 'Geeho Geehosophat! yu'll plug 'im, eh? Yur durned mulehead, if 'ee shoot this way, it 'll be the last time yu 'll ever lay claws to a trigger. Now then!' and Rube stood with his rifle half raised to the level, and threatening to raise it still higher.

At that moment, the lightning gleamed; I saw the sentry with *his* piece also at a level. I well knew the accuracy of his aim; I trembled for the result. In my loudest voice, I called out:

'Hold, Quackenboss! hold your fire! we shall wait till some one comes;' and as I spoke, I caught both my companions, and drew them back.

Whether it was the commanding tone of my voice, which the ranger had heard before, or whether in the light he had recognised my features, I saw him, before it darkened, lower his piece, and I felt easy again.

But he still obstinately refused to let us pass. Further parley was to no purpose, and only led to an exchange of rather rough compliments between Quackenboss and my two companions; so, after endeavouring to make peace between them, I stood still to await the chance of some one of the guard coming within hail.

Fortunately, at that moment, a ranger, somewhat the worse for aguardiente, appeared in the direction of the plazza.

Quackenboss condescended to call him up; and after a crooked palaver, he was despatched to bring the corporal of the guard.

The arrival of the latter ended our troubles, and we were permitted to reach the plazza without further hinderance; but as we passed the stern sentry, I could hear Rube mutter to him: 'Ee durned mulehead! ef I hed ye out upon the parairas, wudn't I? Wagh!'

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AN ADIOS.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow—a demi-lune of love, whose every hour was consecrated to its god. At earliest dawn, by the rosy rays of Aurora; at golden noon, shadowed under sweet acacias; in the gleam of the purple twilight; 'neath the silvery light of the moon.

That both laid our hearts upon his altar, and willing knelt before the shrine, witness ye bright birds and balmy flowers!—ye green myrtles and mimosas!—witness ye blue skies of Anahuac! Ye alone were our witnesses.

For you who have loved, I need not portray the pleasure of this noble passion; for you who have not loved, I cannot. Love is a delight that may be known only to those who have experienced it.

Ours was a half-month of happiness without alloy. True, there were moments of pain—the moments of daily parting—but these were brief, and perhaps only prevented the cloyment of too much joy—if such a thing be possible. Moreover, these short-lived sorrows were in part neutralised by the knowledge we should soon meet again; we never parted without exchanging that fair promise. In the morning, it was '*hasta la tarde;*' at night, our last words were '*mañana por la mañana.*' Lovers have felt, and poets have sung, the pleasures of hope; oft the anticipation of a pleasure rivals in piquancy its actual enjoyment.

Let memory not be forgotten; it, too, has its joys; and oh, how sweet the retrospect of those blissful hours! If there was monotony, it was a monotone of which my heart could never tire. It was an intoxication I could have endured for life. There is no surfeit of such sweets. Why are we not permitted to enjoy them for ever? Alas! there is an ending.

There was so. A crisis came, and we must part—not with the pretty promise upon our lips—'until the morning,' 'until the evening,' but for long weeks, months, may be years—an uncertain time—'*hasta se acabo la guerra*' (until the war is over).

Oh, the misery of that parting! Cruel destiny of war! Never felt I so weary of wearing a sword.

There was a struggle 'twixt love and duty. No, not duty: I might have sheathed my sword, and wronged no one; I was but a cipher among thousands, whose blade would scarcely have been missed. Nor would I have wronged myself. I was simply, as I have already declared, an adventurer. The country for which I fought could not claim me; I was bound by no political conscience, no patriotic *esprit*. Perhaps, now and then, I entertained the idea that I was aiding the designs of 'manifest destiny'—that I was doing God's work in battling against the despotic form. Yes, I may confess that such sparks glowed within me at intervals, and at such intervals only did I feel enthusiasm in the cause. But it was no consideration of this kind that hindered me from deserting my banner. Far otherwise: I was influenced by a motive purely selfish—pride.

I could not—an adventurer almost penniless—I *would* not presume to claim that richly dowried hand. Fortune I might never have to equal hers, but fame is worthy wealth, and glory mates with beauty. I knew that I was gifted with an apt head and bold aspiring heart; I knew that I carried a keen blade, and hoped to hew my way to rank and fame. Perhaps I might return with a star upon my shoulder, and a better handle to my name, and then——

Ah, for all that, it was a bitter parting! It was hard to list unheeding to those earnest entreaties, adjuring me to stay—terrible to untwine those tender arms—terrible to utter that last *adios!*

Our troth was plighted within that same glade that had echoed our first vows. It had been plighted a hundred times, but never sadly as now, amidst sobs and tears. When the bright form, screened by the frondage, had passed out of sight, I felt as if the sun had become suddenly eclipsed. * * *

I lingered not long, though I could have stayed for hours upon the hallowed spot. Again duty, that stern commander, summoned me away. It was already close upon sunset, and by to-morrow's dawn I must be *en route* with my troop.

I was about heading my horse into the track, now well known to me; Isolina had gone down the hill on the opposite side, by a path that led more directly to the hacienda. From precaution, this had been our habitual mode of parting; and we also met from opposite sides. In the wild region of the *cerro*—for by this name was the hill known—we never encountered a human being. There was no habitation near, and the vaqueros rarely strayed that way, so that our place of meeting remained a secret—at least we fancied so—and we acted without much apprehension, and perhaps without sufficient caution. Each hour we had grown more confident of security, and, blinded by love, had taken less pains to conceal the fact of our daily assignation. It was only that morning I had heard a whisper that our affair was known, and that they of the rancheria were not as benighted as we supposed them. Wheatley was my informant—Conchita, his. The lieutenant had added some friendly advice, cautioning me against the imprudence of going so far from the post unattended.

Perhaps I might have treated his remonstrance with less neglect; but as this was to be our last meeting for a long time, my heart grew heavy under the prospect of the parting scene. I preferred going companionless; I had no apprehension that any enemy was near. As for Ijurra, he was no longer in the neighbourhood; he had not been seen since the night of the battle, and we had positive information that he had joined his band with the guerrilla of the celebrated Canales, then operating on the road between Camargo and Monterey. Indeed, had Ijurra been near, he could hardly have escaped the keen search of Holingsworth and the rangers, who, night and day, had been upon the scout, in hopes of overhauling him.

I was about turning into the old track, when a yearning came over me—a desire to obtain one more look at my beloved. By this time she would have reached her home; I should pass near the house; perhaps I might see her upon the azotea—a distant glance—a wave of the hand—haply the sweet prayer, '*va con Dios!*' wafted upon the breeze: something of the kind I anticipated.

My horse seemed to divine my wishes; scarcely waiting for the guidance of the rein, he moved forward upon the path taken by the steed of Isolina.

I soon reached the bottom of the hill, and, entering the heavy timber, traversed a tangled wood—similar to that on the other side of the cerro. There was no path, but the tracks of the white steed were easily followed, and, guiding myself by them, I rode forward.

I had not gone five hundred yards from the hill, when I heard voices echoing through the woods, directly in front of me, and apparently at no great distance. Years of frontier-life had imbued me with an intuitive caution that resembled instinct; and as if by a mechanical effort, I pulled up and listened.

A woman was speaking; and instantly I recognised the voice. There was but one that rang with that rich metallic tone. I might well remember it, for the sweet, sad sounds of the *va con Dios* had not yet ceased to vibrate in my ears.

With whom was she in converse? Whom had she encountered in such a place, amid the wild woods?

She ceased speaking. With ears keenly set, I listened for the rejoinder. Naturally, I expected it in the voice of a man; but not that man. O heavens! it was the voice of Rafael Ijurra!

'COPYING BY LIGHT.'

Many of our correspondents having been unsuccessful in their trials of this process, we now give some further particulars, which they will find of great assistance:—The months of November, December, January, and February are not favourable for copying prints, the sunlight being too weak. Under most states of sunlight in this country, instead of *a quarter of an hour*, which would be sufficient under very favourable circumstances, the paper may be exposed even to four hours. After the paper has been spread over with the solution, it is to be dried in the dark, say in a drawer or dark room: if dried in the light, it will be useless. One of the greatest difficulties is keeping the paper, on which the solution has been spread, in perfect contact with the picture: where it is not in contact, the copy will be very indistinct. The solution of blue-stone and bichromate of potass must be well shaken before being used. The prepared paper will remain fit for use for a long period, if kept in the dark; but it is most sensitive when fresh. The strength of the solution of common salt should be at least thirteen grains to the ounce of water. The print should remain in the solution of common salt until it begins to turn of a yellowish colour.

THE MOHAMMEDAN LADY TO HER HAND-MAIDEN.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

Bring out the mats beneath the trees
Whose boughs are bright with scented gold;
And spread the softest cushions where
The shade is deepest, and the air
Comes coolest through the white-starred fold
Of jasmines, welcoming the breeze.

Bring out the lute, whose sound He loves
To mingle with his own sweet song;
Which hath indeed but one rich theme,
Love—a reality, no dream—
A sparkling rosebud twined among
Life's common paths, wherein he roves.

Bring sherbets of the rarest taste,
Where lime and almond flavours blend;
And fruits, so full of juice, the sight
Shall quench his thirst with strange delight—
As dews that with the sun descend
Refresh and soothe the sultry night.

Pomegranates, crimson with ripe blood;
Grapes, purple as the wood-dove's wings;
Guavas, pink and white, whose smell
The palm-tree paroquet loves well;
And mangoes, whose aroma brings
Dreams of his northern fir-cone wood.

Bring flowers—those roses of the east
Whose tiniest buds are drenched with scent;
And Moogra chaplets, white as snow—
And the sweet myrrhy buds that glow
On the wood-apple,* 'neath whose tent
The sportive monkey makes its feast.

The air is rich, that soon shall be
Much richer by His fragrant breath;
Fan me with scented grass, bedewed
With cooling essence—for my blood
Hope fevers, and the *kuskus** hath
A soothing influence on me.

'Tis twilight, for a fire-fly gleams
Amid the yellow citrons there:
A footstep falls upon my ear,
Whose music tells me He is near.—
Ah me! this world is very fair,
And sweet are young Love's waking dreams!

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* The blossoms, leaves, and fruit of the *Feronia elephantum*, or wood-apple, have a rich odour, not unlike myrrh. The roots of the kuskus-grass, of which mats, screens, and large fans are twisted, when sprinkled with water, give out a spicy and refreshing smell. It is the *vitiver* of modern perfumery.

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SHOP-WINDOWS.

To the opinion of the philosopher who held the shady side of Pall Mall to be the spot on earth most replete with enjoyment, I have but one difficulty in subscribing. On the shady side of Pall Mall there are no shop-windows; and to the real epicurean of the joys of sauntering in metropolitan shade, there can be no happiness on the cool side of any street where shop-windows are not. I am aware that there are men, professors in the delights of idling, to whom the mere pacing to and fro is sufficient, and in whose eyes shop-windows are no more than margins of the footway on the one side, as the kerb-stone is on the other. I am a saunterer of more enlightened creed; and if an Arab by reason of my wanderings, I am at least of the tribe recognised among that ancient people as the 'dwellers in cities;' and my nomadism is limited to the regions civilised by shop-windows. What music is to the banquet—supplying an under-current of harmony that links one enjoyment to the other, and to the patchwork of an entertainment gives coherency and concord—shop-windows are to the peripatetic philosopher. When thought begins but for an instant to stagnate, and the stream of reflection to flow less freely, the next shop-window will furnish fresh matter for our musings, cheer us by the exhibition of some of the pleasant varieties of life, if we are meditating too moodily, or bring us down to the sobering level of reality if our fancy is indulging in too fantastic a flight.

Let who will decry my philosophy as of the shop, shoppy, I care not! I give them their mountains and their valleys, their rivers and their plains, their magnificent prospects and flourishes anent the picturesque, so they let me have the shops; for what are to them simply shops, are to me galleries of art, science, and marvels, and treasuries of never-failing enjoyment; exhibitions where there is no fee for admission, where you are constrained to purchase nor catalogue nor programme of the entertainment, where there are no reserved seats and no fees to attendants. Pass with a glance, or linger for prolonged inspection, you incur neither liability nor obligation; and should you, on these unexpensive terms derive, in any measure, entertainment at the moment, or material for after-thought, how deep should be your gratitude to the source of the benefaction!

What a joy is a print-shop—a Walhalla of the hour! where the popular voice delivers its verdict on public characters through the media of lithography and mezzotinto. It is merely a question of supply and demand. Just as a mother wants a photograph of 'baby,' so does the public demand the face of its favourite: the print-seller is not behind hand, and soon there is the Abon Hassan of the day, the king for the hour, in all the glories of graving, occupying the post of honour in the print shop-window. But there are more heroes for the day than heroes for all time: there is a 'latest novelty' in reputation as in everything else; and at the back of the shop we are peering into, lie a ghastly assortment of celebrities who have been pushed off or have shrunk down from their pedestals before the rival who now reigns in their stead! What bargains might one now secure in enlightened statesmen, who have waned into insignificant M.P.s; accomplished orators, who have shrunk into empty talkers; popular preachers, who have merged in mere bishops; fascinating actresses, whose charms have passed their climacteric; and dashing cavalry-officers, who have been found, on to-day's reflection over the premature verdict of yesterday, to be but heroes of a most Brummagem mint. Truly said George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham: 'We can no more judge of the value of a man by the impression he makes on the public, than we can tell whether the seal was of gold or brass by which the stamp was made. Nevertheless, let us sun ourselves in the light of the countenance of the present hero, and while we bend reverently before his worship, muse how long his reign will last, and speculate upon the heir-apparent to his throne.'

What museums of marvels are pawnbrokers' shops! What a halo of wonderment, half smiling, half sad, consecrates each of the curiosities which, in the shape of unredeemed pledges, illustrate the window. Into what a sea of conjecture do we not drift. Who was the ill-fated proprietor of that handsome cruet-stand, 25s., and what was the untimely occasion that compelled its mortgage? Who was it purchased temporary alleviation of his impecuniosity by 'putting away' that solid silver soup-ladle, 13s. 6d.? Who were the primal possessors of the curved Damascus dagger with jewelled handle; of the antique pistols richly inlaid, which I would not for a trifle undertake to fire off; of the plated chamber-candlestick, very coppery about the edges, and thus fully complying with the provisions of the old law, which required all plated goods to exhibit somewhere the original foundation? Whose heart was eased by the deposit of the bronze head of Cicero, strikingly like Mr Pitt, and a good deal battered as to features? That strange oil-painting, too, in splintered and dirty frame, of a tawny orange-coloured saint, sitting in outer darkness, visited in his opacity by a scarcely less tawny-coloured nymph, with the little wardrobe she has, clothing the air considerably more than herself, descending from sea-green clouds, and presenting to the virtuous ancient in the foreground what seems intended for a bird, a dove perhaps, though very much like a cottage-loaf in shape; the whole ticketed to be by Julio Romano—very fine work, only L.3, 10s. By what combination of circumstances were all these strange and incongruous effects drawn together into the net of the pawnbroker? Did the original owners deposit there their chattels, with the intention of redeeming them at a future period; and did stern poverty, most implacable of creditors, lodge more and more detainers against them, until at last the arrangement was foreclosed, and the equity of redemption lost altogether? How many paid interest on the advance, and so staved off for a time the day of reckoning, which came at last notwithstanding, and engulfed deposit, interest, and all? What have become of the duplicates? Are they destroyed, or held still as faint representatives of treasures once possessed, though now lost for ever—title-deeds of a past prosperity, like the genealogy of a poor peer, or the heavy schedule of a bankrupt trader? What a crowd of shipwrecks, what 'seas of troubles' must there have been to strand upon the same shore such different cargoes! The India-shawl, the clock, the toast-rack, the eye-glass, the bracelets, the thermometer, the umbrella, the flat-iron, the chimney ornaments, the teapot, the opera-glass, the Sutlej medal, the wedding-ring, the spurs, the freemason's insignia, the gold-watch, engine-turned, and jewelled in four holes, and last, melancholy item! the small silver-gilt locket, in which a plait of light-brown hair is still nestling. Melancholy token! Love himself—it can only be a love-gift—the prisoner of the pawnbroker!

But this is sad; let us 'move on.' What a haven for half-an-hour's loitering is the bookstall!—half-way house between the publisher and the butterman—*morgue* for the disposition of defunct literature, in case some friendly hand may charitably claim the sad remains for private interment, and so rescue them from the ignominy of dissection at the cheese-shop. 'Paint an inch thick, to this complexion must we come at last.' All these at fourpence: *Cassivelaunus, a Tragedy*, in five acts; *Sturm's Reflections; The Soul's Vigil, and other Poems; Watts's Logic;* and vol. ii. of the *Rightful Heir*, a novel, in three volumes (Newman: Leadenhall Street). *The Whole Duty of Man* for fourteenpence, the *Clergyman's Vade-Mecum* for threepence, *Paley* for ninepence, and *Pope's Homer* for a shilling. 'How the knave jowls them to the ground.' Did these books cost no more the making but to play at loggats with them? Let the man who desires to write a book, visit first a bookstall, see what he can buy for sixpence, and then go home and not write it.

Newsvenders have cheerful shop-windows. There we find exhibited that interesting illustration—on the first page of the cheap periodical, which always seems to be published in advance of its date—to which I never could find the relative letterpress. There are hung up the newspaper placards: 'Horrible Murder at Horsleydown;' 'Homes and Altars, by Gracchus;' 'Curious Case of Breach of Promise;' 'Helotry in High Places;' 'Bishops and Bigamy;' Theatricals, and all the News of the Week. There are the etchings of the new monthly serial; there the vast wood-cuts of the illustrated newspaper; and there a miraculous draught of shilling light literature, in rainbow covers, demonstrating, alas! too frequently, that lightness is not synonymous with brightness after all, and that there may be flame without, although there be no fire within.

Then there are bonnet-shops!

There is something about bonnets so peculiarly suggestive of the married state, that a steady inspection of them by any one on the hither side of the rubicon of matrimony, seems to be almost a certain token of an approaching change of condition; and a bachelor of autumnal age curiously scrutinising the contents of a bonnet-shop becomes a spectacle of serious import. I must admit both my autumnity and unmarried status, and yet braving all the imputations and remonstrances the admission may call down upon me, avow myself a devotee of bonnet-shops. I speak of the exterior only. The interior—*procul este profani*—is one of those arcana with which we cannot be perfectly acquainted until we have emerged from the novitiate of bachelorhood, and become priests in full orders of the temple of Hymen. Such glimpses behind the veil as we may have caught before arriving at that full-blown condition, can have been secured only by stealth or accident. A forlorn commission, having reference to a hideous fabric something of the hue and shape of a copper coal-skuttle, with a bird of paradise of fierce aspect and many colours perched on the top—the bonnet of an elderly maiden-aunt in the country—afforded me the only experience I ever enjoyed of the interior of a bonnet-shop. But of bonnet shop-windows I profess myself an amateur. To me those fancy filmy elegances—I am not speaking of ancient ladies' bonnets now—those corner-stones in the edifice of a pretty woman's toilet, possess an infinity of attractions, and, as it appears to me, appeal even more to male than to female admiration. I can conceive a woman considering a bonnet very much as an anatomist might regard a woman. He would mutter: 'Bone, muscle, vesicles, chyle, &c.; a very nice subject.' She would eye the bonnet with an unpleasantly analytical glance, and murmur: 'Moiré, lilies, lace, guipure, &c.; a sweet bonnet.' They both know too much to admire boundlessly; they are so clever they become critical, and lose the faculty of blind admiration. Man, by the very plenitude of his ignorance, enjoys a fuller gift of appreciation. He can regard the bonnet only as something beyond the grasp of his understanding, and to be admired in proportion to the impossibility of comprehending it: as a feather in the air, gone up out of reach; as a substance, if substance it is, vapoury, dreamy, gauzy, in the nature of foliage, which seems to halo round a pretty face, and endow it with multiplied prettiness. So have I, at least, looked at bonnets in shop-windows, and wondered and admired.

There is one bonnet-shop that lives particularly in my memory. It was situated in a populous thoroughfare, dedicated to my forenoon saunter; and it must not be permitted to prejudice my enthusiasm in the cause of bonnets if I concede that the hour when the window was being decked by the fair hands of its attendants was the period I generally selected for my visit to it. It seemed to be a time of high festival when the profane eye of the uninitiated might snatch the privilege of a glance at the eleusinianism of bonnetdom, and see at once both cause and effect, the bonnets and their makers. The ceremony of the arrangement of the window was of an important and protracted nature; and I must own my stay in the neighbourhood while it was going on was continuous. I believe that, from considerations of propriety, I maintained a sort of delusion that I was waiting for some mythical omnibus that never made its appearance. This was but clumsy drapery over my so frequent presence, and shrouded its real motives very ineffectually; but gradually, by use and the pacific character of my proceedings, it came to be accepted as sufficient; and I was at length acquiesced in as a morning visitor who might watch without accusation of rudeness though the omnibus came never so tardily, or came not at all.

One fair item in the group, seen each morning decking the window, as of old the Graces attired Venus, became identified in my mind with the divinity presiding there over the destinies of bonnets; and I mentally worshipped her under those attributes, calling her Bonnetina. Others there were almost fair enough to be deities too, co-operating with and assisting her in her employment; but in her presence I could account them only as satellites in her train, and not as independent powers. It was something to see her white hand dividing the muslin veil that enclosed the shop-window from the mysteries beyond, and then herself emerge, as one of Homer's goddesses might have done, stepping from a cloud to reveal herself in all her glory to some enthralled votary. Simply was she clad, with few ornaments save those with which nature, in a fit of generosity, had bountifully decked her. Glossy locks,

> Simply gordianed up and braided,
> Leaving in naked comeliness unshaded
> Her pearl-round ears, white neck, and orbed brow.

Lips, in their cherry hue, looking so like a bright flower, that I wondered the bees didn't hasten to settle there: they would have done so, I'm sure, but for the window-panes. Eyes so shrouded by silky lashes, that I could never tell their colour. Gems they were, but whether amethyst, sapphire, turquoise, or what, I could never discover. Then there was a grace about her movements, with such a tender solicitude in them, all for the safety and prosperity of the bonnets, as was wonderful to see.

There was a newness of charm in her every action that was something bewildering. Now was she lowly bending over a bonnet, as though it were an infant, and she its mother watching its first step; now was she erect with uplifted arms, the bonnet high over head, as though it were a cluster of grapes she was gathering for an Olympian banquet; and anon was she kneeling in a suppliant attitude, as though she were offering the bonnet as a propitiatory sacrifice at the shrine of some superior deity. I am sure she loved those bonnets, every one, and that her heart bled as they were one by one sold and taken from the shop.

I almost think I loved Bonnetina, I could watch her and her bonnets so untiringly. I was known to her by sight, for a smile of half recognition would sometimes wander over her face, as she wondered perhaps what I could possibly see to interest me so much in the shop and its doings. She never, I am sure, resented my incessant supervision as an impertinence. She seemed to have comfortably in her own mind recognised me as a chartered sentinel over the destinies of the bonnet-shop. I knew and studied every phase of its existence. The latest novelty from Paris was to me quite an antiquity before other gazers at the window had gathered its newness into their intelligences; and even the *papier-mâché* dummy, which I could detect filmily through the gauze curtains—a machine, I conjecture, on which bonnets were put to be trimmed, a species of anvil, in fact, representing a very pink-faced lady, with very arched eyebrows, no particular expression, and a very white bald head, when that member was unclothed by bonnets—became as familiar to me as one of my own household.

It pains me to add, that at last I loitered too long and saw too much; that one day a strangely-shaped vehicle, not exactly a carriage, nor exactly a cart, but something like a very high gig on four wheels with a huge box attached to it behind, drawn by a large horse addicted to snorting loudly, with protuberant knobs on its joints, drew noisily up to the door of the shop. Two men sat on the seat of the vehicle; one—I could notice only him—swollen and blunt as to features, with exaggerated whiskers, red in hue, smoking a cigar, cheap by its odour, and with hands large in size, and knotted and gnarled like the limb of an oak-tree. He wore no gloves, but he did a ring, which, by contrast with his hands, which were dingy of colour, sparkled brilliantly. He swung down from his seat, came with a great clash on the pavement, puffed a cloud of very distressing black smoke into my face, expectorated fiercely on the pavement—partially, I regret to say, on my boot—and strode into the shop. What was he that he should enter that consecrated spot with so much audacity? A suggestion came to my relief regarding travellers for orders. I looked in at the door, and saw Bonnetina in the arms of the mysterious stranger—and nothing more. I shivered as I thought how many women besides Titania have been enamoured of asses' heads—how often men have bowed before idols which were but common clay after all—and I quitted the precincts of that bonnet-shop for ever.

I had something to say about other shop-windows of the cheap photographers, where we may study with advantage what distressing objects can be made of the human countenance by means of the least exaggeration of truth: of the pastry-cooks, of the haberdashers, of the ham and beef depôt; but I can proceed no further now. Let me conclude, therefore, with a re-enunciation of the principles with which I started, that to perfect Pall-Mall's shady side as the lounge of enlightened loiterers, shop-windows must be introduced. What say you, then—suppose we turn the Athenæum into a bookstall, the Travellers' into a bonnet-shop, make a second-hand clothes-shop of the 'Rag,' and convert the Carlton and the Reform into warerooms for the exhibition of unredeemed pledges!

NATURALISTS' FIELD-CLUBS—A DAY WITH THE WOOLHOPE.

Have you, reader, ever fallen in the way of the Natural History Field-clubs which now prevail in some of the western English counties? If not, you will perhaps be glad to hear something about them. They are not unworthy of your attention.

Perhaps if you, a stranger, saw one of these fraternities at its field-work, you would feel regarding them much the same doubt as that which Beattie speaks of as being entertained regarding his Edwin:

> Some thought him wondrous wise, and some believed him mad.

We beseech you, lean to the former theory, and you will be nearest the truth. The catching of butterflies, the inspection of mosses and lichens, and the chipping of stones on the wayside or in quarries, may look to the unlearned as foolishness; but others well know that in such pursuits there lies a game profound. The Transactions published by three several West of England clubs—the Cotswold, Woolhope, and Malvern—would alone bear us fully out in what we are asserting.

Will the gentle reader please accompany us for a day with the Woolhope? On a summer morning, between the hours of six and seven, a dozen middle-aged personages are seated around the breakfast-table of their honorary secretary in the old city of Hereford, some doing justice to the morning meal, others preparing their botanical cases; some sorting pins for unfortunate insects, and others arranging their geological apparatus, comparing clinometers, or chatting over fossils. Soon the arrival of the *'bus* puts an end to the arrangements, and in a few minutes the whole party are off to 'the hills' by the train.

We have amongst us two or three county gentlemen, a city banker, two or three country clergymen, a couple of doctors, an architect, a lawyer, and a tradesman or two; yet, strange to say, for the livelong day we hear nothing of magistrates' meetings, or the late conviction of Betty Jones; not a word of High Church or Low Church, Broad Church or no church; the funds are at a discount, and law and physic are alike thrown to the dogs. As the train passes rapidly onwards, hills and quarries, rivers and plains, birds, beasts, fishes, and insects are the topic of conversation, until the spot is reached where the day's investigations are to commence. Here probably some local members are assembled, and shouldering our haversacks, away we go.

As the particular object of this day's ramble was the geology of a part of the Welsh coal-field, I may be excused if I give an outline of the geology of the district, independently of our individual experiences. Taking our stand, then, upon the Vans of Brecon, the Gadir above Talgarth, or the Blorenge above Abergavenny, and looking northward, we behold a greater amount of geologic record than we can see elsewhere in this part of England. We look upon the country of the Cambrians and Stiper Stones, on the classic ground of the Longmynds, Caer-Caradoc, and the Upper Silurians of Ludlow, Kington, and Presteign; we see the hills and dales of the Old Red Sandstone, and the distant outline of the carboniferous and trappean Clees.

And what, then, are the particular points—what the lesson the geologist would impress upon the mind of the beginner, when pointing out the Cambrian Longmynds, the Silurian Caradocs, and the wide expanse of Old Red Sandstone that stretch forth in the distance before him? It appears that philosophers have good reason to believe that the *interior* of this planet is composed of various minerals, molten by the intensity of heat myriads of ages ago; the now crystalline masses of Plutonic rocks that compose the *inner crust* of the planet's surface 'were formerly fluid—possibly were formerly gaseous and nebular.' The Plutonic rocks that support the rocky shell of the globe we occupy, are ancient beds of lava, cooled gradually at enormous depths in the dark recesses of the planet's bosom, and have been raised by earthquake action and volcanic agency, from a depth of many thousand feet in the earth's interior, to the surface.

It is on these formerly molten, and now solidified Plutonic masses, that the lowest aqueous stratified deposits rest, and the Longmynds consist of these. With these earliest aqueous rocks, we possess indubitable evidence both of the action of the atmosphere, and the existence of water; also, that from the remotest epoch of this planet's history, the laws which govern inorganic matter have continued unchanged, and mineralogical, chemical, and mechanical laws have acted the same part.

The Cambrian sedimentary rocks of the ancient Longmynds bear upon their surfaces the marks of the ripple of sea-waves, and the impressions of rain-drops, as well as tracks of marine worms and the remains of zoophytes and crustaceans.

Hence the geologist draws two deductions: In the first place, from the earliest ages of geologic history, the chemical constituents of the atmosphere have decomposed the mineral substances of the most ancient Plutonic masses, whenever or wherever exposed to the surface; while *water* has transported the débris of those rocks, in the form of boulders, pebbles, sand, and mud, to depressions in the earth's surface; and this débris became in time layers of stratified deposits—much as stratified rocks are formed in the present day. The history of those Cambrian sediments differs little from the history of aqueous deposits now forming beneath the waves of the Atlantic and Pacific, and the *agents* were the same.

Again, although the Longmynd deposits are the *lowest known* basement aqueous formations, we cannot but reflect that later discoveries teach us that they are no longer to be considered *azoic*, or destitute of evidence of the creation of *life*, while, although the animals hitherto discovered are of low organisation, they occur towards the base of 26,000 feet of Cambrian aqueous deposits; and thus teach us the important lesson that, as far as our present evidence goes, there were no lifeless seas, no useless atmosphere: with the first evidence of *water* upon this planet's surface, we have proofs of the introduction of life!

Passing upwards from the Cambrian rocks, the geologist finds new proofs of the exertion of Creative power. 'Old actors go out, and new ones come in on the stage of organic existence, and each formation is, as it were, the lifting of the curtain, and the discovery of a new scene.' The Lower and Upper Silurians added to the Cambrian deposits, amount to a thickness of ten miles. The Llandeilo rocks of the Corndon and Shelve district, may be seen from the mountains of Brecon; and the distant Snowdon is now known to consist of strata of that Lower Silurian epoch. In these beds, for the first time, the mollusk makes its appearance (*Lingula Davisii*), accompanied by the graptolite, a zoophyte allied to Virgularia (a sea-pen). The Caradoc hills are also visible; and the geologist calls to mind the contemporaneous Lower Silurian deposits in Shropshire, on the flanks of the Malverns, at May Hill, Huntley, and the hills of old Radnor; all of which localities he beholds from the hills of Old Red Sandstone that rise on the edge of the coal-field of South Wales.

Step by step, as we ascend the geologic ladder, we find evidence of the creation of new animals, new shells, new corals, new trilobites; upwards of 1000 species of animals are known in the Lower Silurian rocks of Great Britain; while in Bohemia, Mr Barrande has discovered 1500 species of Cambrian and Silurian fossils, all of them before unknown there, and nine-tenths of them distinct from the species of Scandinavia and England.

The typical rocks of the Upper Silurians may also be pointed out in the magnificent view outstretched before us. The Woolhope valley of elevation is distinctly seen, and the Upper Ludlow rocks of Aymestry, Presteign, and Kington stand out boldly against the sky. To corals, shells, and crustaceans, the geologist now adds the evidence of the creation of fish, and remembers that the upper rocks of the Upper Silurians contain the first evidence of the existence of fish and terrestrial plants in the bone bed of Ludlow and the Lycopodiums (club-mosses) of Gammage Ford.

We now reach the epoch of the Old Red Sandstone, the strata of which are represented by a mass of rocks in this district not less than 10,000 feet thick, and which cover up the Upper Silurians and their catacombs of organic remains.

This series of rocks presents geologically a new epoch in the history of the development of the planet, in its air-breathing reptiles and armour-cased (ganoid) fishes, its tree-ferns, marine and fresh-water shells, and very highly developed crustacea. Who shall tell of the ages that elapsed from the commencement of the deposition of the Old Red Sandstone, until the close?—who of the denudation, the wearing down of hundreds of square miles of stratified deposits, thousands of feet thick?

Let those who would study the problem, investigate the geologic phenomena in this district alone—mark well the evidence, the insuperable evidence presented, of enormous denudation on the heights of the Vans of Brecon or the sides of Pen-Cerrig-Calch, and reckon the time necessary, first, for the deposition of the strata, and then for their after denudation, if he can!

Nor is this all. As far as our present evidence goes, we remind the tyro in geology, that throughout all the depths of stratified beds below the Old Red Sandstone, we have but a very partial glimpse of the existence of a terrestrial flora, and that it is in strata of the age of the Old Red that we first begin to recognise with any confidence that 'green web which has covered our earth ever since the dry land appeared.' It is important to remember that the Carboniferous or coal-bearing was not the *first luxuriant vegetation*, but that the land of the Old Red Sandstone epoch possessed its tree-ferns and knorria that clustered in thickets beside its waters; while we also call to mind that, although myriads of ages have passed since the sun shone upon the ferns of the coal or the last of the calamites, the more ancient vegetables of the Old Red Sandstone had perished and become fossil before many of the coal-plants had been summoned into being.

We must not, however, forget the explorations of the Field-club. The Old Red Sandstone passes upwards from old red conglomerate into yellow sandstone, mountain limestone shale, mountain limestone, and millstone grit; and it was this succession of strata the club visited on the occasion in question.

We ascended the Blorenge in a fog; and the strange fantastic shapes of the boulders that were scattered on the hillside in every direction, often drew exclamations of surprise, as we trudged along, like Southey, growling at 'clouds and weather.' We wondered, too, how the boulders *got there*, as many of them were evidently not parts and parcels of the Blorenge, but had been carried there somehow from a distance. If I remember rightly, I argued for ice and the glacial theory as the transporting agent; others were for 'waves of translation;' while one gentleman suggested that they might be relics of a game of 'chuckie-stanes,' played by Old Nick or some demon of the hills. Our guide, who, fortunately for us, knew every inch of the ground, pointed out where rivers and mountains, and distant churches, and 'the loveliest scenes' ought to have been, and no doubt were, if we could have seen them. As it was, the mist and cloud drew largely upon our imaginations.

There is not much hospitality on the heights of the Blorenge; but an investigation of the cairn erected by the government surveyors on the summit might still furnish a *bottle without the sherry*, which was quaffed to the toast of 'a brighter day and better luck next time.'

It was no wonder after this, that there was a burst of delight among the naturalists when the fog cleared and the sun lighted up the bare rocks, and heath, and glens, and hills, 'smooth, and green, and dry,' arose before and around us; while some of us felt with the Ettrick Shepherd, 'after a', what is any description by us puir creturs o' the works o' the great God?'

It was in descending the hill that one of the party, who had separated from the rest, gave a loud view-halloo, and we quickly joined him to inquire into the *find*. It was the impression of a large fluted trunk of Sigillaria upon a mass of millstone grit—a carboniferous plant which Dr Hooker believes to be cryptogámous, and allied to ferns. What a blessing is a knowledge of natural history! A casual observer would have passed this relic of another world—not so the geologist! The form and foliage of the original tree—the aspect of the land on which it grew—whether a river washed it out to sea—whence came the boulder of the millstone grit itself—were the particles that made up the grit imbedded with the ancient tree? these questions furnished us with discussion and pleasant chat for an hour after we had left the relic of that tree of a coal-forest, still lying on the portion of the old sea-bed which received it when first imbedded. It must not, however, be supposed that the country naturalists skipped from the Old Red Sandstone to the millstone grit, and left the intermediate rocks (limestone shale and carboniferous limestone) unquestioned and unsearched; on the contrary, both were examined, attacked with hammers, and their treasures stored.

As we before remarked, the upper beds of the Old Red Sandstone are succeeded by limestone shale; the shale by thick beds of coralline limestone; and this by millstone grit, coal-measure sandstones, ironstone, and coal.

The previous remarks on the fossils of the Old Red Sandstone, its reptiles and plants, apply to Scotland and Ireland, and indicate the *proximity of land;* while in Ireland, contemporaneous deposits appear to have been deposited in great fresh-water lakes—witness the *Anodon Tukesii*, undoubtedly a fresh-water shell. In Herefordshire and the Shropshire district, however, these strata must have been deposited in *deep water*, as the only relics we possess are sodden and water-worn sea-weeds, a few scattered remains of the fishes so common in Scotland, and no shells. Probably the depth of the sea was too great to allow of the existence of the mollusca throughout the area under review; and, for age after age, deposition of sand, and mud, and conglomerates went on. That ocean-bed at last shallowed, and became a fit habitat for shells, corals, and the fishes that were their contemporaries. Be this as it may, at the very base of the limestone shale is a true *fish-bed;* while, as we journey upwards, myriads of animals testify, by their dead and stony forms, that in the mountain limestone sea they lived and died. The sea-bed had shallowed towards the period of the upper sandstones, fishes swarmed in the waters, and some volcanic outburst slew them by thousands; for what other cause can account for their sudden destruction! The ocean-bed still shallowed, and the coral animal built its barrier-reef and raised its habitation above the waves, while the *Productus*, *Orthoceras*, and other mollusks harboured in the same localities, and were entombed in the same grave.

In some localities, this rock is made up of a mass of corals, and the geologist can hardly visit the grand scenery of the mountain limestone, whether among the crags and peaks of Derby or Cumberland, the noble St Vincent's Rock at Clifton, or the glorious scenery of the Wye, without seeing everywhere imbedded, the wreck of coral and encrinital animals of another world, and the relics of which are often employed to erect the habitation, frequently the mausoleum, of the human race. Nor has the coral animal ceased its work, though the genera and species may be changed: For more than 4000 miles of linear space in the Pacific and Indian Oceans have these apparently insignificant polypes reared their rocky habitations; and the principal difference between the history of the recent coral formation and that of the mountain limestone is, that the former build their stony mansions on the heights of a continent which has gradually sunk beneath the waves, while the latter reared their indestructible monuments on the rising and shallowing bed of an ocean that was filling up with the débris of other lands destroyed.

The geologist can hardly study the records of his science without becoming convinced that, ever since the creation of ocean and land, oscillation has been constant and unvaried. There probably is not one square inch of dry land upon the wide world's surface that has not been, during some past period, below the waves. The highest mountain-ranges bear upon their flanks the tenants of former seas, which have been thrust upwards from their former sites, gradually, and by degrees, by those ever-active agents within the planet's bosom, the volcanic forces, which elevate some portions of the earth's surface, and depress others.

That such is the evidence furnished by the phenomena of the 'millstone grit,' where it rests upon the mountain limestone, we can hardly doubt. Some great change of the physical geography must have occurred, probably an elevation of contiguous land, and the depression for a certain time of the bed of the mountain-limestone sea. The millstone grit and sandstones in some parts of England, cover up to a great thickness, with rolled conglomerates and sandstones, the extinct animals of the limestones and limestone shale. Sea-waves and currents washed above their relics hundreds of feet of rolled pebbles and drifted sands, and we know that the coral animal and its associated shells could not exist in deep water. Land, however, was not distant, for the plants of the coal leave their impression upon the sandstones and even the coarser grit. Again, the sea-bed rose, until shallow water and swampy land occupied the site where deep sea-waves had rolled before.

The Palæozoic coal period, with its luxuriant vegetation, its reptiles, fish, and insects, drew nigh, and what period more strange in all the strange epochs of this planet's history?

Had Sir Humphry Davy discovered potassium, and thrown it into a tub of water, in the presence of the first James, he would certainly have been burned for a wizard, and we know the tender mercies of the bigots who tortured Galileo!

Our great-grandmothers would have scouted the idea of the electric telegraph as a Munchausian fiction, or the history of coal as a 'device of the wicked one' to ensnare philosophers. Notwithstanding the prejudices of our excellent progenitrices, the results of many years' observation by geologists, botanists, and microscopists, have established the fact, that *every particle* of the coal we burn is undoubtedly of *vegetable* origin; and a very remarkable fact it is concerning one of the commonest articles of daily life.

Let any one, ignorant of geologic facts, sit down quietly by his fireside, and as he watches the cheerful blaze, be told for the first time—that every portion of that bituminous substance consists of the remains of trees and plants that flourished myriads of ages ago—that in times so remote, the animals which were the contemporaries of the ancient groves and forests, that furnished this vegetation, were entirely different from any that now inhabit the earth's surface—that the existing races of animals were not created until myriads of years after the carboniferous or coal reptiles, fish, insects, shells, and crustaceans, had *become stone*, and the plants of that coal-period, consisting of strange tree-ferns, stranger club-mosses, gigantic reeds and conifers—forms that have now scarcely a type—had *become coal!* Is it not a most strange history?

Yet what is this compared to the reflections that must sometimes cross the mind of the geologist when he compares the history of the past with that of the present—when he stands among the wreck of forests of a world gone by, and reflects upon the marvellous history of the black and now mineral mass before him. Once green, bright, and beautiful in the sunshine, now a stony mass, sought after by thousands of intellectual beings, stocked into, and upheaved, from the bowels of the earth, to rejoice and comfort myriads of the human race. What a blessing does it shed upon the poor man as well as on the rich; how many a cottage does it cheer, and how wretched the home altogether without it! Again, the rail-carriage rushes through the air, and the frigate ploughs the waves by the aid of gases, which have been stored *in coal* for untold cycles of ages in the recesses of the earth. These remains of an extinct vegetable creation rest above the relics of extinct *marine* organisms; while one of the most remarkable facts connected with the history of this Palæozoic vegetation, is the simultaneous luxuriance of this ancient vegetable world in almost every known region of the globe. Forests, whose vastness and shade are unknown to have been enlivened by the song of the bird, flourished in every latitude—for the plants of the Palæozoic coal are found beneath the ice and snow of Spitzbergen—and the same ferns, reeds, club-mosses, and conifers grew at the same period in arctic and antarctic, tropical and temperate zones—in Australia, Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. In that distant epoch, *in all latitudes*, that strange vegetation appears to have been present and to an extent that often strikes the geologist with awe, when he reflects on the untold ages that must have elapsed during the elaboration of a vegetable kingdom that he may dream of, but never behold.

In our South Wales coal-fields, the coal-measures are estimated to attain the thickness of 12,000 feet; 100 coal-beds are intercalated at various levels, and we have undeniable evidence of successive terrestrial conditions. The coal-fields of Nova Scotia are nearly *three miles thick*, cover an area comprising 36,000 *square miles*, and contain 51,000 cubic miles of solid matter (*Lyell's Manual of Geology*).

Compared with the American, our English coal-fields shrink into insignificance, and the knowledge of such facts should awaken feelings of the sublime as regards the exercise of divine power, even on such unsentimental subjects as coal-fields.

The moment, therefore, that the beginner puts his foot upon the coal-measures, let him recall some of these great facts connected with their natural history, and he will find it impossible to study the phenomena of the fossil plants, their varied form and structure, their ancient and present chemistry, and their geological history, without also discovering fresh proofs of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator.

Bearing in mind, then, the vegetable origin of coal, its chemistry and constituents, the enormous amount of vegetable matter necessary to compose the coal-fields of the world, the wide diffusion of identical species of coal-plants, the vegetable organisms the microscope discovers in every block, and their association with extinct animals known to belong to the carboniferous epoch, the cryptogamic character of the vegetation, and the absence of any known *existing* plant or tree, we would draw to a close the reminiscences of some lessons learned and facts examined on a day's ramble with the Woolhope Naturalist's Field-club. The great use of these societies is the interchange of ideas, and the opportunities which constantly occur of meeting with others better informed than ourselves. I, for my own part, can affirm that many a difficult local problem has been worked out through questions asked at these meetings, and which at the moment were unanswered, and apparently disregarded. Sir Roderick Murchison has lately met with a stringent geological question in the Kington district, as regards certain transition beds between the Old Red Sandstone and his Upper Silurians, and the puzzle was furnished by a member of the Woolhope Club (Mr Banks). The Woolhope Club lately visited the district under review, and met with the very remarkable phenomenon, in England at least, of the great facts of geology carried home to the hearts and minds of working-men, by one of their most active and working members. Honour be to those to whom honour is due!

A gentleman, resident at Beaufort, near Abergavenny, has taught the principles of geology to several of the miners of the district, and some of us were put to the blush by the superior knowledge of the coal-plants displayed by those whose bone and sinew raised the fossil fuel from its long resting-place. Fancy a stalwart miner taking you to his little museum of fossil plants, and pointing out the difference between Sigillaria and Stigmaria, and speaking even eloquently upon the beauty of extinct ferns! Nevertheless, this phenomenon came under the observation of us county naturalists but a very few weeks ago. May we not, then, yet hope that the common things of common life shall yet become known to working-men, and that the knowledge of God's works shall be no longer a sealed book!

It is a great mistake to suppose that it is necessary to be highly educated, to be a classic or a mathematician, in order to be a naturalist. A large amount of the knowledge of God's works is within the reach of every one; and some of the most eloquent writers have been working-men, who have carried on their pursuit of the study of nature amidst the hard struggle of a laborious life. Who can forget the opening of the *Old Red Sandstone*, and the conviction expressed by the writer, and impressed upon his readers, that 'there is no necessary connection between labour and unhappiness, that a very exquisite pleasure may be a very cheap one, and that the busiest employment may find time to enjoy it?'

A LADY'S OCCUPATION OF SVEABORG.

We had left St Petersburg with a resolute determination to enter Sveaborg; great was, therefore, our disappointment when our demand for admission was answered by a positive but very polite refusal. No foreigner was granted a permission, and without a permission, no one could enter.

I know not how it was that an inspiration came to me, and prompted me to seek—not at the residence of the governor of Helsingfors, but in the summer-house-like ball-room of the pretty wooden building where mineral waters are manufactured, in the rocky gardens nearly opposite to that renowned fortress—for some assistance in effecting the object for which we had made a two days' voyage. We had not the least wish to return to St Petersburg satisfied with an outside view of its rocks, or of the guns that peeped over them. It was, however, merely to gratify our English fancy for being able to say 'we had been;' because, being very peaceably inclined, and knowing nothing whatever of the art of fortification, we could not hope to do our country any great service by the exploit we meditated. Moreover, the refusal, if it did not excite our courage, annoyed our feminine self-will, and to effect an entrance into Sveaborg became to us a sort of necessity—a decided point of honour.

I asked a young lady to accompany me to this ball-room. She was seized with a fit of shuddering: she was so nervous, she said, and could not, in any case, go there without her papa: ladies never went into public unattended by gentlemen. I knew this was quite a Swedish law, and the good folks of Helsingfors are mostly Swedes still by nature.

Nevertheless, as she loved the English well, I won her over; and, under the promise of protecting her from her enemies, she agreed to come to the little ball where ladies danced in their bonnets.

The inspiration that drew me there was not at fault. A very fine lady was soon presented to me, whose first question, as is customary to a foreigner, was, wherefore had we come to the little town of Helsingfors, where there was less to be seen than in our own country.

'To enter Sveaborg,' was my reply.

'That is not possible,' she answered, 'just now.'

'I think we could do it, if we tried,' I rejoined. 'It would be dreadful to have our object defeated—if any one would help us'——

I continued to talk without perceiving that our nervous little friend, Mamsell M——, was whispering at the further ear of this fine lady.

What was settled between them we did not know, but the latter, turning to me, said: 'Well, well, be tranquil, madame; I think you will succeed.'

And the timid mamsell—which title is the Swedish or Finnish translation of mademoiselle—whispered slyly: 'To-morrow we shall be in Sveaborg.'

'Now, is it not extraordinary!' I answered. 'You certainly thought my taste for balls was outrageous; but something told me this ball-room would prove a stepping-stone to Sveaborg.'

'Perhaps, then, if that were your only purpose, you would now wish to come away? The carriage waits, and as papa is not with us'——

'Take my arm, and let little Harry walk at your other side; thus you will find yourself well protected; and let us also come away directly,' said I; and thus defended, Mamsell Malvina M—— walked to the carriage.

The next day a boat was waiting in sufficient silence at the foot of the landing-steps nearly opposite our abode. Mamsell Malvina now took us in charge, and we set off for Sveaborg.

The plan of operations had not been submitted to us: so far as we could understand, our entrance was to be effected either by surprise or treachery; the only condition imposed upon us was, that we were to be speechless, and trust to our leader. Our boat followed in the wake of that belonging to the fortress, which discharged its cargo precisely as we drew up to the rocky steps beneath the gates.

Some persons residing in the fortress, or who had come there on business, delivered their pass, and entered before us. A smart officer demanded ours: we had none to give. I expected the great gates to be shut in our faces; but with the greatest composure our fair Malvina answered, that she had come to see the commandant.

To see the commandant? The words were more than usually electrical. The officer stepped back, raised a hand to the side of his face, and, drawing himself up in a military salute, delivered us over to a soldier of the guard, desiring him to convoy us to the house of the commandant.

We arrived at a large, barrack-like edifice; the rather poor doorway was guarded by two sentinels. There we were made over to another guard, who took us in charge until the soldier summoned a domestic servant. The man appeared excessively bewildered by our visit, and utterly at a loss how to act. Mamsell Malvina told him her name, and said she had come to see the commandant. As there was no lady in the case to whom the visit was to be paid, it was all the more perplexing. With a very unwilling countenance and hesitating movements, the man let us enter the hall, or passage, and then he went away, and appeared to us no more. Perhaps he only let us in because he saw our leader would not be kept out. He probably reported the fact of this outwork being in her possession to some higher subordinate; for, after a long time of patient occupation, a voice called from the top of the stone-stairs to ask who was there.

Mamsell Malvina M——.

What did mamsell want there?

To see the commandant.

The commandant was then engaged; but as it would not do to suffer his visitor—especially when that visitor was a lady, and a young one—to stand in the entry of such a house, the case was again reported to some other subordinate authority; and again a voice called over the stairs for mamsell to advance. Looking back to us as she did so, she told her servant-man to follow her; and taking this as an intimation that we were to remain, we stopped short on the cold, dirty stairs. We waited there so long, that we began to think the possession of Sveaborg itself was scarcely worth the trouble we were taking for its inspection only. However, I sat down and amused myself with reflecting how very droll it was to be sitting on the cold, dirty stone-stairs in the commandant of Sveaborg's house.

Some one, apparently, at their head saw us thus posted, for again an invisible voice—at least, the voice of an invisible being—in a more friendly tone, asked us to come up and sit in the corridor. By this we gathered the important fact, that our leader was engaged in conference. In the corridor we found a friendly-looking officer, who, while as much mystified as his subordinates, seemed disposed to put a smiling face on the matter, and to look rather quizzical. The door by which we concluded our leader had entered was shut, and we were afraid to disobey orders by speaking, though, for my part, I felt very desirous to do so. Fortunately, our capacity of passive endurance was not put to the Russian extremity of proof. An officer of engineers came along the corridor, looking delightfully important, and carrying in his arms a vast quantity of designs on card-board, which the good-humouredly smiling one informed us were plans for the re-edification and enlargement of Sveaborg. An involuntary movement of curiosity on our part, as the door opened to admit him and his plans, was noticed by the smiling officer, who invited us to follow into the ante-chamber of the commandant.

Thus were we slowly, but steadily, advancing; all the outworks had been carried by our undaunted leader, and to follow with due caution, was our only duty. In short, a minute or two more placed us in view of the great general himself, standing, with some of his staff around him, and our little leader sitting full before him. I wondered at her courage. He is of fierce visage, that commandant, with a restless, wild expression, that might well keep at bay the stoutest of our admirals, let alone an unprotected female. Indeed, limited as my own knowledge is, I know personally only one of the leaders of our hearts of oak who has a peculiar fancy for encountering such a style of physiognomy.

As for the figure, it was in full uniform, the bust covered over with decorations and medals that were almost as fearful to encounter as the physiognomy. And seated demurely on a chair fully confronting all, was dear little Mamsell Malvina, our gallant leader, with looks so demure, and eyes so straightforward-looking; while the fiercely-visaged, restless-eyed commandant of Sveaborg stood before her with an air of no little perplexity. The allied fleet, I suspect, never perplexed him as much.

Mamsell Malvina had come to see him, that position was clear; might he inquire what was the object of her visit?

She wished to see Sveaborg.

Mamsell was in Sveaborg. She could retire when she pleased.

Mamsell wished to inspect the works; she could not do so without the good commandant's order.

What possible purpose might Mamsell have in inspecting the fortifications? Did she, perchance, wish to make some descriptions?

Mamsell Malvina was not in the habit of making descriptions, and did not, in the least, understand fortification.

Where, then, was the utility of viewing the fortress?

That Mamsell Malvina could not at all say: it was a fancy of hers; she had a wish to do so, and she knew the good commandant would enable her to do so better than any one else.

Just at the moment, the officer of engineers, with his plans, stepped from the ante-chamber into that where the discussion was carried on. The restless eye of the commandant grew a thousandfold more restless: it was plain that his whole soul—his heart, at least—was in those plans. He gave a hasty order: it was as hastily obeyed. A tall, thin, young officer appeared, as if moved on by wires, at the door, and stood passively there.

'Take charge of this lady round the fortress, and shew her'—— A wave of the hand certainly left that young man a discretionary power, for the commandant, with a hasty bow, was turning away to follow the plans, when his eye fell upon us. Queen Mary of England said the name of Calais would be found graven on her heart after death. I do not say so much; but I am sure the eye of the commandant of Sveaborg is graven on mine at this present moment.

It was perfectly a *ruse de guerre* which enabled our leader, by the most graceful Swedish courtesy, to cover our retreat. And when, with our Russian escort, we crossed the boundary and found ourselves in the open air, we not only began to breathe freely, but in our hearts to marvel at that singular faculty that makes wise men, in ordinary circumstances, pass for fools, brave ones rate themselves as cowards, and firmly nerved young ladies appear shy-faced and tremulous.

We sallied forth from the quarters of the commandant, full of confidence in the strategical powers of our commander; but, as regarded our own line of action, we were now doomed to experience that the results of devoted obedience and settled purpose are frequently made to depend on accidents of a most trivial character. If a man is often made a hero by an accident, we need not wonder if a woman be led to change her tactics by a look.

Thus, for example, Mamsell Malvina was to be the only one of our party who possessed the prerogative of her sex—the use of the tongue—the only weapon universally conceded by the so-called stronger sex to the weaker. But, by a provoking accident, it happened that it was not to her our Russian guide would address his speech; he seemed bent upon tantalising our national courage, or tempting our pledged obedience, by words and questions that appeared meant to provoke answers. At last came one of the latter, accompanied by a look that human fortitude—at least such an amount of that quality as I possessed—could not resist. I answered—I spoke.

'Ah, madame, *vous êtes Anglaise!*' was the instant reply. (Ah, madame, you are English?)

'Yes.' What else could I say, since a true Briton must not hide his colours. But, by way of extenuating my breach of orders in the judgment of our little leader, I asked: 'How could you know that?'

The young Russian did not reply by telling us our English tongues generally betrayed us, but with a knowing smile he accounted for his sagacity by saying:

'Ah, I was three days in England. They took me to your Plee-mont before I was sent to France.'

'What! you were a prisoner of war?'

'Yes;' laying an open hand on his breast. 'Your soldier struck a bayonet here at Bomarsund; but one of your officers saved me.'

Who could help regaining the use of speech now? Perhaps in my case it was too late to learn obedience; or, worse still, perhaps, the object having been gained, the leader we had followed was suffered to fall to the rear. However that be, a fraternisation at once took place with the interesting young wounded prisoner of war.

He appeared to be consumptive, poor fellow, and complained of the confinement of Sveaborg more than of the imprisonment he had undergone at Tours. The dreary monotony of life on this island-rock, the so-called Gibraltar of the North, must be worse than that undergone on the more splendid Gibraltar of the South.

No one can leave it, even for the adjacent town, without permission from the commandant. And to such a confined and monotonous life, the military, he said, might be subjected for as much as ten years at a time. The heat was now excessive. He seemed to feel this monotony relieved even by our chance visit. While walking to the church—which, as if he had been a real guide, was, he thought, the first object we might wish to see—he gave us some hints about the fall of Bomarsund.

'There was no great glory in taking Bomarsund,' he said; 'it was an unfinished fortress—in fact, only a fortified barrack with guns in the windows; and we had a garrison of 1200 men against the allied fleet of England and France—40,000 assailants against 1200.'

'Oh!' little Harry ejaculated; but an admonitory touch silenced his combativeness.

We had chanced, before this, to have been in company with the late commandant of Bomarsund—a little old man, whom, doubtless, other people recollect. His feet appeared to be gouty, and his eyes were defended by square green glasses. Some of his country-people told us, that if the Emperor Nicholas had lived till fate restored him to his own land, he would have been shot.

'For what?' we asked. 'For surrender?'

'No; for defence. The emperor wished Bomarsund to be evacuated without waiting an assault; but this commandant wrote to him that the place was tenable, and the garrison willing to die within its walls, but not to evacuate them, and craved permission to do so. The permission was granted, but not acted upon. The emperor's opinion was right, and he was very angry at the result of the attempt at defence.'

I do not believe, however, he would ever have thought of lessening the number of the brave old general's days. The church is the most prominent object in all Sveaborg, and by far the finest edifice. In Russia, war and religion go hand in hand; a true Russian always believes he is fighting for his church and his faith; for his country is identified with both. Seen at a distance on the gulf, this blue dome mounts aloft far above the death-dealing batteries it seems to command. It still bore conspicuous evidence of its share in the last combat. A great rent was visible, which had been made in it by a shell from the besieging fleet. At each side of the church door were piled five cannon-balls—English balls, they are all called, perhaps to do them more honour. They are left there, I believe, to shew that they could not get within the church walls.

Who can tell what a history time may give to these balls? They will probably, if Russia and her church go on for the future in accordance with the past, come to be one day the subjects of a miraculous legend, attached, possibly, to some particular patron, whose picture these ten cannon-balls were fired at in vain by the English; just as half a century ago the French vainly expended their ammunition against the Kremlin picture. And so at last they will be regarded with veneration instead of aversion; and the poverty of the real history of the attack on Sveaborg will be draped, in process of time, with a fanciful and pious tale, calculated to cherish the steadfast belief of the primitive Russian in that saintly protection which he believes ever has defended, and ever will preserve from foreign, and therefore heretical foes, the land where alone the true faith exists. The rent made by the shell in the blue dome remained unrepaired, perhaps because it is to be included in the general works of reparation about to be commenced. Our young guide led us up to a picture on the sanctuary wall, and shewed us a small splinter of this shell fastened to its frame, and then pointed out a slight scratch on the painting; leaving us to infer, from a half-and-half sort of manner of exposition, that it had not been able to do more than give that little scratch to the saint's image; and in lasting memory of its audacious assault, was fastened to the frame for life. He merely shewed us the fact, leaving the measure of belief quite to ourselves.

From the church we proceeded to the batteries, which no visitors, even natives, are allowed to inspect; but we—truly safe inspectors, as we knew nothing about them—had come from the commandant's house, and been given an escort by the commandant's own self; we were therefore naturally supposed to be the commandant's good friends. Our guide was most kindly desirous to explain all to us, but I believe Mamsell Malvina, though she listened to him, understood nothing more of assault and battery than we did.

There was a good deal to tell a tale of itself: blackened, roofless buildings; cannons whose roar was stilled for ever—visible demolition of works still apparent. The chief damage was done by the explosions of three magazines. The officer said they were small ones.

'And if a large one had followed?' we inquired.

'Then, indeed, it would have been very nearly all over with them here,' he answered with a pleasant smile.

The smile was *so* pleasant that I said in answer:

'Do you know, I think it was very nearly all over with them as it was.'

'No; not then. But your Nap—peer could have done something for us if they had allowed him.' Before I could ask an explanation of this saying, he pointed in another direction, and added: 'One of your officers came there sounding; he never minded the guns, though the shot was falling on the water, but went on just as if they were fishing.'

'But why did not the shot fall on his boat instead of on the water?'

'We could not get the guns to carry then: they never reached your ships.'

'Why had you not guns to carry further, or people to serve them better?'

'Because we were ignorant. But now we know better: we are prepared for you when you come again.'

We made him a bow, and said that the same case both had been and was our own.

We might have assumed a belligerent tone, for as he irritated me by that now common remark, that one particular person might have done something for them—that is, against them—if he had had better means, I was just going to ask if he knew why another had not finished doing something for them, when our own precious little leader, who had effected for us an entrance into Sveaborg, came up with a face that appeared at once to suggest a peace-conference to our young hero of the wounded breast: and he left me standing with my hand upon a gun, and eyes staring over the tranquil water of the gulf, to make out a reply for myself to the question, while he, I believe, set about an easier work; for then we have reason to hope that a negotiation was opened on the batteries of Sveaborg which may lay the foundation of a future and permanent alliance. Leaving the young Fin and Russ to discuss three, four, five, or as many points as they pleased, we stood looking in silence over a scene of perfect repose: not even the tread of a sentinel broke the silence of the rocky ground, nor the splash of an oar the stillness of the glassy water. And we recollected the words of which the fulfilment appears yet so distant: 'Men shall learn war no more.'

I often think of that young Russian with a feeling of regret. As he stood erect with feet drawn together, and the side of his hand to that of his face, in the fashion of a military salute, while we moved away from the rocky isle, I felt that his had been one of the passing acquaintances which we wish so much to renew, perhaps partly because there is no probability that we ever shall be able to do so. He and our young companion may often meet when we are far distant from both. For our parts, we were impressed with the conviction, that where cautious reserve is abandoned for frank kindness, an honourable prudence on the other side is more imperative; and in this conviction do I thus glance over the details of our visit to Sveaborg. We never meant to make any description of it, and were unable to do so if we wished it. But nothing is more abhorrent to good feeling than to read words that had evidently been spoken in friendly intercourse, set down in order in the pages of a book. Better is it to leave an article or a chapter ever so meagre, than to finish it by committing an injustice, or being guilty of an act of ingratitude.

The tomb of the founder of Sveaborg—that is to say, of the Swede who constructed its fortress, for the hand of a mightier Architect laid the everlasting foundations—stands just before the house now occupied by the Russian commandant, who, like most of the generals in that service, is by origin a German. Like Thorwaldsen, Ehrensvärd chose to be buried amid his own works, but did not foresee that his tomb would be guarded by the people against whom he had erected these works. When the fortress of Sveaborg was finished, Ehrensvärd wrote these words in his diary: 'I can now die in peace, since I have erected an impregnable barrier between Sweden and her natural enemy Russia.'

But though Ehrensvärd died in peace in that conviction, his monument stands before the house which has been occupied by a Russian since the last commandant who held that fortress for Sweden delivered it up to 'her natural enemy.' That monument is one of those which form curious commentaries on human opinions or expectations.

Though it is generally said that General Cronstedt treacherously surrendered Sveaborg to the troops of Alexander I., the Russians themselves admit that it was not an impregnable fortress at the commencement of our recent war. That it may be rendered so, is not unlikely. Some of the neighbouring wooded isles in the gulf were being surveyed by the government officers for the purpose of clearing, fortifying, and erecting magazines and storehouses upon them. The re-edification of the place will doubtless considerably improve it; and thus the result of our late bombardment will be, as our young Russian said, to cause them to know better, and be prepared for us if we come again.

The passage left by the rocks between Sveaborg and the coast of Finland, or Helsingfors, is so narrow, that it was blocked up by a Russian man-of-war laid across it. The sides of this large ship are battered with shot. It stands, a disabled veteran, in the dock of Helsingfors. But our occupation of Sveaborg has terminated.

FIRE-PROOF DWELLINGS.

What can be more appalling than the cry of Fire! Fire! in the darkness of night, and in the midst of a crowded city! And then, what fearful sights and sounds salute the eye and ear as we arrive at the scene of the catastrophe!—'blazing beams and scalding streams;' ladders and fire-escapes; cries for water, and screams for assistance; stern countenances rushing forward to meet and grapple with the dreaded enemy, from which at the same time half-clothed and affrighted creatures are flying for dear life! Our object is not, however, to write an essay on Fire, so much as to offer some suggestions tending to shew that much may yet be done to increase our command over this element, so well called in the old proverb 'a useful servant, but a terrible master.'

Ingenuity has been frequently at work to invent the means of extinguishing fire when it has occurred, and of saving life when that is in jeopardy. But surely the more important question regards the *prevention* of the calamity. Fire-proof houses are indeed no novelty. It is only necessary to substitute brick arches for wooden joisting, in order to render any house safe against the spread of fire. But this, we suppose, is the more costly method of building, otherwise it is hard to conceive a reason for the plan being so seldom adopted. Again, when timber must be employed, it is a commonly received scientific dogma, that, if saturated with a solution of alum, it would be nearly as incombustible as stone. Now, why should any man about to invest his money, and risk the lives of his family in a building, hesitate to ascertain for himself whether this is true, and, if true, profit by the fact. It could cost but a small sum to dig a tank in which the timbers could be soaked in the solution; and alum itself is cheap. We have heard that lime-water will produce the same effect, besides rendering the timber more durable. Doubtless, there could easily be found some means of depriving timber of its extreme combustibility; if so, are not our architects and engineers much to blame for allowing us to go on building funeral piles for ourselves, under the name of dwelling-houses?

But supposing brick-arched houses impossible, and that timber must remain as it is, there are still means which may be used to lessen the danger from fire. Every house should have several staircases, *built of stone*, and expressly with a view to safety. Indeed, if we had absolute power, we would prohibit the erection of wooden stairs at all; we would insist on the stairs at least being constructed with some incombustible material.

Again, in all country establishments, a proper supply of ladders, carefully ascertained to be of the right length, should be always ready, with the addition of such approved fire-escapes as have been found successful in practice.

All, or any of these precautions, are better than nothing; and it involves a fearful responsibility to neglect them. But the great desideratum after all is, not so much the means of escape from a house on fire, as to prevent the conflagration from taking place at all. We have already made some suggestions to this effect; but we have one more, which we have purposely reserved for the last, as it is that one from which we ourselves entertain the greatest hopes of success.

Again entering our solemn protest against wooden staircases *in toto*, we proceed to observe, that the imminent danger to human life from fire is one which, like some others, is almost peculiar to England.

Where wooden houses exist on the continent of Europe, they are usually low, so that on the first alarm the inmates can generally be saved, *viâ* the windows, without difficulty. In other cases, the materials of brick and stone enter so largely into the construction, that it is almost impossible for fire to extend very far. But we desire especially to call attention to a mode of construction much used in Italy, and which seems to combine all the elements of cheapness with solidity and incombustibility. This we shall now endeavour to describe.

It has happened to ourselves to watch the construction of large houses, locally called palaces, in the town of Pisa, for example, in which, we can vouch for it, there was not employed one square foot of timber of any sort from garret to cellar. The only timbers in the house were those of the roofing. Every staircase, partition, ceiling, and floor was made of brick; but brick used in such a way that the arches of the ceilings were scarcely thicker, relatively to their span, than a tolerably thick egg-shell is to its own.

No words can do justice to our surprise when we first realised the fact that arches so constructed will resist any ordinary pressure; and we had to recall to our recollection that no man is strong enough to break in an egg-shell, applying the pressure at the ends. The mere fact of thinness does not necessarily imply weakness, and indeed we had ample proof of this in pursuing our observations. The arches of which we now speak are built without centering, the mason striking out his work, to begin with, by horizontal lines along the wall at the required height. If it is intended that the arch should be 'coved up'—that is, sloped from each side to the centre—he draws a line all round the room, and chips away a little groove along this line, to receive the edge of his first row of bricks, or rather tiles, which are secured in place by a little gypsum of a cheap gray sort. After the first row is completed, a second is applied, as before, with a little cement between the edges. The tiles are kept in a bucket of water, out of which they are taken at the moment they are wanted for use. They struck us as being of a superior sort to the common red brick, harder, and more cohesive. These tiles, we also observed, are much of the same shape as if a common brick was split in two longitudinally; their dimensions being about twelve inches long by one inch and a half in thickness. The scaffolding rests on high tressels, and extends over most of the surface of the room; and as the work proceeds, a bit of stick is here and there put on end between it and the advancing arch. When the sides have been thus brought almost to touch each other, the workman cuts away from a tile as much as will just allow it to fill the remaining void with the proper quantity of cement: this put in place, the arch is complete. We have formed one of a party who have walked fearlessly all over such an arch as we have described, a few minutes after its completion. The whole ceiling may, in fact, be considered as one piece; and its convex form not only prevents the tendency to give way from its own gravity, but it will also, like the egg-shell above alluded to, resist an enormous downward pressure besides.

The next process is to fill up the hollow sides of the arch with rubbish, gravel, or whatever is most convenient; with this material, the floor is brought to a level; and then it is carefully trodden down, giving vast solidity to the whole. A coat of mortar is next laid on, and in this are imbedded other tiles, more or less handsome, according to circumstances; or, in many cases, those beautiful compositions are employed in which the taste and skill of the Italians are so conspicuous. Thus the principle of which we speak is applicable, as we can testify from personal observation, to every sort of dwelling, from the cottage to the palace.

We may perhaps be excused for dwelling a moment upon a case of fire in which the useful qualities of this sort of building were fully brought to the test. It was in the year 1829, while we happened to be sojourning in that marvellous city Genoa, that the population were alarmed with the cry of 'Fire!' Now, fire in a town in which there was then but one street wide enough for a four-wheeled carriage, and where the houses are of enormous height, is, to say the least of it, rather alarming. We joined the crowd which was pouring along to the scene of danger; and on arriving at a small open square in front of a large building called the Zecca (or Mint), we saw that it was indeed in a blaze. Now, had the system of construction been the same there as it is in London, we have little hesitation in saying that no human efforts could have prevented this city of palaces from being reduced to a heap of ashes. As it was, what we saw blazing so furiously was merely the roof and outer blinds of the building in the top story. A cordon of the fine Sardinian troops was quickly formed to supply water; the engines played steadily; the stone and brick floors of the story in which the fire had broken out were kept constantly wet, until the fire had consumed all the timber within its reach, and then it went out from want of fuel.

We have never forgotten this incident; and we think it—to use a phrase which has *not* been hackneyed of late—highly suggestive. In a recent visit to Italy, we had a curious experience of the fact, that in our day there is a tendency to deterioration in many things. Houses are 'run up' now anyhow, to last a certain time; 'so that,' as a wag observed, 'they and the building-leases may *fall in* together.' We thought the paper-house system was confined to England; but in conversing on our present topic with an intelligent Italian gentleman, he told us that in many places the mode of building with wooden joists and floors was fast superseding that which we had so much admired, and which we have attempted to describe. It is not pretended that it is better or safer, but it is cheaper; and why? Because the *bond* established between opposite walls by timber joists and beams, enables the constructer to dispense with the good old quality of strength in these parts of the building—to run up, in short, his walls of mere pasteboard, which would not comport with the outward pressure of the brick-arch; while the new plan dispenses with the transport and cost of material and labour on walls of proper thickness, and rubble to fill in the cavities between the sides of the arch and the floors. In a country where human industry has so wonderfully called into play every square inch of land, there may be some force in this argument as to the greater immediate cheapness of the new system; but it is equally clear that it throws away the precious advantage of incombustibility, besides being by far the most expensive in the end. It is, of course, a mere matter of calculation, all the circumstances of the case being taken into consideration, which of the two systems—the one giving durability and safety; the other, cheapness, insecurity, and speedy decay—may be best worth adoption; but the question of safety is, it would seem, but a feather in the scale in the estimation of some of us; while with others, like the sword of Brennus, it has a weight and importance which cannot adequately be expressed in words.

We by no means grant, however, without proof of the fact, that in this country the adoption of the Italian mode—we mean the old one, which is still very extensively used—would be other than an economy. Let the architects and builders tell us what they think about it.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XLIX.—THREATS.

Yes, the voice was Ijurra's. I knew it well. While listening to it by the mesa, I had noted its tones sufficiently to remember them—round, sonorous, of true Spanish accent, and not inharmonious, though at that moment they grated harshly upon my ear.

An indescribable feeling came over me: it was not jealousy—I was too confident to be jealous—and yet, I shame to confess I felt a sensation sadly akin to it. After those earnest oaths, those tears and frenzied kisses, so soon after! O shame upon me!

Alas! the experienced heart no more enjoys the tranquil continuity of faith. Its belief is like a broken dream—an intermittence of light and shade. It was my misfortune, my error, perhaps my crime, to remember too many pairs of pretty perjured lips.

In a word, I was once more jealous, in spite of all that had passed—of sighs, and tears, and plighted vows—once more jealous of Ijurra!

But the moment before, his name was on her tongue, and spoken with scorn; in the same breath I was assured that he was no longer in the neighbourhood, that he was far away.

No; he was upon the spot, in close conversation with her, and scarcely five minutes after the oath had been sworn that bound her to me for life! Less wonder I was jealous.

That the feeling lasted only for an instant might be some palliation, but it was no merit of mine that brought it so quickly to a termination. I cannot screen my conduct behind an act of volition; for although the poisoned sting rankled but for a few moments, during that short period I yielded obedience to its demoniac promptings.

I slipped down gently from my saddle, and with the crouching gait and silent tread of the jaguar, approached the speakers. My horse, well trained to such tactics, stayed where I had dismounted, without tie or hopple. No fear that his hoof would betray me.

Step by step I advanced, with my hands cautiously parting the boughs. The fronds of a curious *sabal* palm befriended me. They grew vertically on short petioles, like large green fans; and overlying one another, formed a perfect screen, through which the keenest eye could not perceive the approach of an intruder.

In a few seconds, I stood behind the last row that bounded the edge of a small opening; and peering through the serrate interstices of the leaves, I saw my betrothed and her cousin. Isolina was still in the saddle. Ijurra was on foot, and standing by her stirrup, with one hand resting upon the pommel, the other grasping the rein.

Up to this moment, my heart had continued its painful throbbing; but the attitude of Ijurra, with his troubled and angry look, at once produced a revulsion in my feelings. I saw that the encounter had been accidental—at least on the part of Isolina; I saw that she was *detained*. I could not see her face; it was turned in the opposite direction, and towards Ijurra; but the tones of her voice reached me, and by these I perceived that she addressed him in anger. Oh, how those accents of indignation ravished my heart; sweeter were they to me than the softest melody!

As yet, I had heard nothing of what had passed between them; the loud beating of my heart, the rustling of the leaves under my feet, of the boughs as I pressed through them, had prevented me from distinguishing what was said. These sounds ceased as I came to a stop; and although still fifty paces distant from the speakers, I could catch every word of their conversation, from the loud tone in which it was carried on.

'So, then, you refuse?'

It was Ijurra who put this interrogatory.

'I have done so before, Rafael; your conduct has given me no cause to change my mind.'

'Ha! my conduct has nothing to do with it; you have other reasons. Isolina, do not imagine I am such a *bobo*. I know your secret: you love this *gringo*—this Yankee captain?'

'And suppose I do, that is my affair. Nay, more, sir, I shall not even attempt to make a secret of it. I do love him—I do—I do.'

Ijurra's eyes gleamed with malignant fire; his lips turned white, and tightened over his teeth; he seemed endeavouring to curb the exposure of his spleen.

'And you would marry him?' He asked with compressed emphasis.

'I *shall* marry him,' was the prompt reply.

'*Por todos santos!* it shall never be.'

'And who is to hinder it?'

'I.'

'Ha, ha, ha! You are raving, Rafael Ijurra!'

'You may love him to your heart's content—I care not; but marry him—never; s'death! never!'

'Indeed?'

'By the saints, I swear it. I swear'——

'You have sworn enough: you are sufficiently perjured already.'

'*Carrai*,' furiously shouted Ijurra, as if losing patience. 'Listen to me, Isolina de Vargas! I have something to say that may not be so pleasant'——

'You can say nothing pleasant; but I listen.'

'First, then, here are certain documents that concern you—both you and your father.'

I saw some folded papers in his hand, which he had taken from under his jacket. He opened and held them before her face, as he continued:

'This safeguard is one given by the American commander-in-chief to the Doña Isolina de Vargas. Perhaps you have seen it before? And here is a letter from Don Ramon de Vargas to the commissary-general of the American army, enclosed within another from that functionary to your pet filibustero—a pretty piece of treason this!'

'Well, sir?'

'Not so well for you, madame. You forget that General Santa Anna is now chief of this republic. Think you he will not punish such traitorous correspondence? *Carrambo!* if I but lay these documents before him, I shall have an order for the arrest of both yourself and your *Ayankieado* father as quickly as it can be spoken. Nay, more; the estate will be proscript and confiscated—it will become mine—mine!'

The speaker paused, as if for an answer. Isolina remained silent. I could not see her face to notice the effect. I fancied that the threat had terrified her. Ijurra continued:

'Now, señorita! you better comprehend our relative positions. Give your consent to become my wife, and these papers shall be destroyed on the instant.'

'Never!' was the firm response that delighted my ears.

'Never!' echoed Ijurra; 'then dread the consequences. I shall obtain orders for your arrest, and as soon as this horde of Yankee ruffians has been driven from the country, the property shall be mine.'

'Ha, ha, ha!' came the scornful laugh in reply—'ha, ha, ha! you mistake, Rafael Ijurra; you are not so far-sighted as you deem yourself; you forget that my father's land lies on the *Texan* side of the Rio Grande; and ere that horde of Yankee ruffians, as you term them, be driven out, they will establish this river for their boundary. Where, then, will lie the power of confiscation? Not with you, and your cowardly master. Ha, ha, ha!'

The reply maddened Ijurra still further, for he saw the probability of what had been said. His face became livid, and he seemed to lose all control of himself.

'Even so,' he shouted with the addition of a fierce oath—'even so, *you* shall never inherit those lands. Listen, Isolina de Vargas! listen to another secret I have for you: know, señorita, that you are not the lawful daughter of Don Ramon!'

I saw the proud girl start, as if struck with an arrow.

'I have the proofs of what I repeat,' continued Ijurra; 'and even should the United States triumph, its laws cannot make *you* legitimate. You are not the heiress of the hacienda de Vargas!'

As yet not a word from Isolina. She sat silent and motionless, but I could tell by the rising and falling of her shoulders that a terrible storm was gathering in her bosom.

The fiend continued:

'Now, madame, you may know how disinterested it was of me to offer you marriage; nay, more, I never loved you; I told you so, it was a lie'——

He never lied in his life as he was doing at that moment. His face bespoke the falsehood of his words. It was the utterance of purest spleen. I read in his look the unmistakable expression of jealousy. Coarse as the passion may have been, he loved her—oh! how could it have been otherwise?

'Love you, indeed! Ha, ha, ha! love you—the daughter of a poor Indian—a *margarita!*'

The climax had come. The heaving bosom could bear silence no longer; the insult was unendurable.

'Base wretch!' cried she, in a voice of compressed agony, 'stand aside from my path!'

'Not yet,' answered Ijurra, grasping the bridle more firmly. 'I have something farther to communicate'——

'Villain! release the rein!'

'Before I do, you shall promise—you shall swear'——

'Again! let go! or this bullet to your heart!'

I had sprung from out the thicket, and was running forward to her rescue. I saw her right hand on high, and something shining in its grasp. It was a pistol. Its muzzle was turned upon Ijurra.

No doubt the resolute character of her who held it was well known to him, for the threat produced an immediate effect; the coward relaxed his hold, the reins dropped from his fingers, and with a mingled look of hatred and fear, he stepped back a pace.

The moment the bridle became free, the steed, already startled by the spur, bounded forward, and after half-a-dozen springs, both horse and rider disappeared behind the screen of the palmettoes.

I was too late to play the knight-errant. The 'ladye faire' had not needed my help; she neither saw nor heard me; and by the time I arrived upon the ground, she had passed out of sight, and Ijurra was alone.

CHAPTER L.

AWKWARD ODDS.

Ijurra was alone, and I continued to advance to the spot where he was standing. His back was towards me, for he still fronted in the direction in which Isolina had galloped off. He had followed her with his eyes, with a cry of disappointed rage, with a threat of malignant vengeance.

The sound of his own voice hindered him from hearing mine, and he was not aware of my presence, when I paused scarcely three feet from where he stood, and directly behind him. I held my sword drawn; I could have thrust him in the back, through and through again, before he could have offered either defence or resistance. He was completely in my power.

Fortunate was it for him at that moment that I had been bred a gentleman, else in another instant his lifeless body would have lain at my feet. A plebeian blade would have made short work with the ruffian, and I confess that my instincts of fair-play were sorely tried. I had before me a man who had sought my life—a deadly foe—a deadly foe to her I loved—a perjured villain—a murderer! With such titles for himself, he had none to the laws of honour; and I confess that for one short moment, I felt like ignoring his claim. 'Twas but for a moment: the thought revolted me. Wicked and worthless as he was, I could not stab him in the back.

I leaned forward, and tapping him upon the shoulder, pronounced his name.

It was the first intimation he had of my presence; and starting as if hit by a bullet, he turned face towards me. The flush of anger upon his cheek suddenly gave place to a deadly pallor, and his eyes became set in that peculiar stare that indicates an apprehension of danger. This he must have felt keenly, for my determined look and drawn sword—to say nothing of the surprise by which I had come upon him—were calculated to produce that effect.

It was the first time we had stood face to face, and I now perceived that he was a much larger man than myself. But I saw, too, that his eye quailed, and his lip quivered at the encounter. I saw that he was cowed; I felt that I was his master.

'You are Rafael Ijurra?' I repeated, as he had not made answer to my first interrogation.

'*Si, señor*,' he answered hesitatingly. 'What want you with me?'

'You have some documents there (he still held the papers in his hand); a portion of them belongs to me. I shall trouble you to hand them over.'

'Are you Captain Warfield?' he asked, after a pause, at the same time pretending to examine the superscription upon the commissary's letter. I saw that his fingers trembled.

'I am Captain Warfield—you ought to know by this time?'

Without noticing the insinuation, he replied: 'True—there is a letter here bearing that address. I found it upon the road: you are welcome to it, señor.'

As he said this, he handed me the commissary's order, still retaining the other documents.

'There was an enclosure? I perceive you have it in your hand. I beg you will make me equally welcome to that.'

'Oh! a note signed Ramon de Vargas? It was an enclosure?'

'Precisely so; and of course goes along with the letter.'

'O certainly; here it is, señor.'

'There is still another little document in your possession—a safeguard from the American commander granted to a certain lady. It is not yours, Señor Ijurra! I beg you will deliver it to me. I wish to return it to the lady to whom it belongs.'

This was the bitterest pill I had yet presented to him. He glanced hastily first to the right and then to the left, as if desirous of making escape. He would fain have done so, but I kept him under my eye, and he saw that my hand was ready.

'Certainly there is a safeguard,' replied he after a pause, and with a feigned attempt at laughter. ''Tis a worthless document to me; 'tis at your service, sir captain;' and as he handed me the paper, he accompanied the act with another sorry cachinnation.

I folded the precious documents, and thrust all three under the breast of my coat; then placing myself in fighting attitude, I cried out to my adversary to 'draw and defend' himself.

I had already noticed that he wore a sword, and, like myself, it appeared to be the only weapon he carried. I saw no pistols upon his person. I had none myself—nothing save a light cut-and-thrust sword. It was far slighter than the sabre of my antagonist, but it was a weapon that had seen service in my hands, and I had perfect confidence in it. I had no fear for the result against so cowardly an adversary; I was not awed, either by his heavier blade, or the superior size of his person.

To my astonishment, he hesitated to unsheath his sword!

'You *must* draw,' I shouted with emphasis. 'You or I have now to die. If you do not defend yourself, I shall run you through the body. Coward! would you have me kill you with your blade in its sheath?'

Even the taunt did not nerve him. Never saw I so complete a poltroon. His white lips trembled, his eyes rolled wildly from side to side, seeking an opportunity to escape. I am certain that could he have hoped to get clear, he would at that crisis have turned and run.

All at once, and to my surprise, the coward appeared smitten with courage; and grasping the hilt of his sabre, he drew the blade ringing from its scabbard, with all the energy of a determined man! His reluctance to fight seemed suddenly to have forsaken him. Had I mistaken my man? or was it despair that was nerving his arm?

His cowed look had disappeared: his eyes flashed with fury and vengeance; his teeth gritted together; and a fierce *carajo* hissed from his lips.

Our blades met—the sparks crackled from the creasing steel, and the combat began.

Fortunate for me, that, in avoiding the first lounge of my antagonist, I had to turn half round; fortunately I turned so soon, else I should never have left that glade alive.

As I faced in the new direction, I saw two men running towards us, sword in hand. A single glance told me they were guerrilleros. They were already within ten paces of the spot, and must have been seen long before by Ijurra.

This was the key to his altered demeanour. Their approach it was that had inspired him with courage to begin the fight, for he had calculated the time when they should be able to get up, and assail me from behind.

'*Hola!*' shouted he, seeing that I had discovered them—'*Hola! El Zorro—José! anda! anda! Mueran los Yankies! al muerte con el picaro!*'

For the first time, I felt myself in danger. Three swords to one was awkward odds; and the red giant, with a companion nearly as large as himself, would no doubt prove very different antagonists from the poltroon with whom I was engaged. Yes, I was conscious of danger, and might have retreated, had I deemed such a course possible; but my horse was too far off, and the new-comers were directly in the path I should have to take to reach him. I could not hope to escape on foot; I well knew that these men run as lightly as Indians, for we had often proved their capacity in that accomplishment. They were already too near. I should be overtaken, struck down, pierced, with my back to the foe.

I had no time to reflect—just enough to leap back a pace or two, so as to bring all three of them in front of me, when I found my sword clashing against their blades, and parrying their blows one after the other.

I can describe the unequal combat no further. It was a confused medley of cut and thrust, in which I both gave wounds and received them. I was wounded in several places, and felt the warm blood running under my clothes and over my face. I was wearied to death, and every second growing weaker and fainter. I saw the red giant before me with his hand raised on high. His blade had already drawn my blood, and was crimsoned at the point; it was about to descend with a finishing-stroke. I should be unable to parry it, for I had just exhausted my strength in guarding against a blow from Ijurra. My hopeless peril wrung from me a cry of despair.

Was it my cry that caused the blade to drop from the hand of my antagonist, and the uplifted arm to fall loosely by his side? Was it my cry that created the consternation suddenly visible in the faces of my foes? I might have fancied so, had I not heard a sharp crack from behind, and seen that the arm of El Zorro was broken by a shot!

It seemed like the awaking from some horrid dream. One moment I was battling, face to face, with three desperate men; the instant after, their backs were towards me, and all three were running as for life!

I followed them with my eyes, but not far; for at twenty paces off they plunged into the thicket, and disappeared.

I turned in the opposite direction. A man was running across the open ground with a gun in his hand; he was advancing toward the spot where I stood. It was he who had fired the shot. I saw that he was in Mexican costume; surely he was one of the guerrilleros—he had aimed at me, and wounded his comrade?

For some seconds, I fancied that such might be the case. Evidently he was bolder than any of the three, for he continued to advance, as if determined to attack me alone!

I placed myself in readiness for this new antagonist, taking a fresh grasp on my sword, and wiping the blood from my eyes, that I might the better receive him.

It was not until he was close to the point of my blade, that I recognised the long ape-like arms, and crooked mateless limbs of Elijah Quackenboss!

CHAPTER LI.

AN OFFICIAL BLACK-LIST.

The ranger, after delivering his fire, had not waited to reload, but ran forward with the intention of joining me in the hand-to-hand fight, though he carried no other weapon than his empty gun. But this would have been an efficient arm in such hands; for, despite his unsymmetrical build, Dutch Lige was stalwart and tough, and would have been a full match for any two of my assailants, had they stood their ground. But the crack of the gun had set them off like deer. They fancied, no doubt, that a stronger force was near; perhaps they remembered the terrible rifles of the trappers, and no doubt believed it was they who had arrived to the rescue. Indeed, such was my own belief, until I saw the oddly costumed ranger bounding towards the spot.

A glance satisfied me that I owed my preservation to Lige's love of botanical science. A large globe-shaped cactus plant, bristling like a hedgehog, hung dangling from the swivel of his gun—it was thus carried to save his fingers from contact with its barbed spines—while stuck into every loop and button-hole of his dress could be seen the leaves and branchlets, and fruits and flowers, of a host of curious and unknown plants. He had been herborising in the woods; and coming by chance within earshot of the scuffle, had scrambled through the bushes just in time to spoil the *coup-de-grâce* intended by El Zorro.

'Thanks, Quackenboss! thanks, my brave friend! you came in good time: you have saved me.'

'But a poor shot I've made, capten. I ought to have broken that red divel's skull, or sent my bullet into his stomach; he's got off too easy.'

'It was a good shot: you broke his arm, I think.'

'Ach! 'twas a poor shot; the cactus spoiled my aim. You hurt, capten?'

'I am wounded, but not mortally, I think. I feel a little faint: 'tis only the blood. My horse—you will find him yonder—among the trees—yonder. Go, Lige; bring my horse—my horse'——

For some minutes, I was out of the world. When consciousness came back, I perceived that my steed had been brought up, and stood near. The botanist was bending over me, and binding up my wounds with strips torn from his own shirt. He had one boot on; the other stood by, full of water, a portion of which he had already poured down my throat, and with the rest he proceeded to bathe my temples and wash the blood from my face.

This done, I soon felt refreshed and strong enough to mount; and having climbed into the saddle, I set out for the rancheria, my companion half guiding, half leading my horse.

By the path which we followed, we should have to pass close to the hacienda and within sight of it; but night had come on, and the darkness would hinder us from being observed. It was what I now desired, though I had left the cerro with hopes and wishes directly the reverse. With a red gash upon my forehead—my uniform torn and blood-stained—I feared being seen, lest my invalid appearance should create unnecessary alarm. But we passed on without meeting any one, either by the hill or upon the main road; and in half an hour after, I was safe within my *cuarto* in the house of the alcalde.

* * *

The incidents of the day preyed upon my spirits, and I was far from feeling easy about the future. I knew that my betrothed would be true till death; and I felt ashamed that I had doubted her, even for a moment. About her loyalty I had no uneasiness, and I mentally vowed never more to give way to suspicion.

It was no thought of that that now troubled me, but an anxiety about *her personal safety;* and this grew stronger the more I pondered upon it, till it assumed almost the form of a fear.

The man who had used such bitter threats, and behaved with so much rudeness, would scarcely stop at anything. 'Tis true I had deprived him of much of his power over her, by stripping him of the dangerous documents; but it was not the time, nor was he the man to stand upon nice distinctions of legality, where jealousy and cupidity were the incentives to action. Holding a sort of irresponsible office as the chief of what was less a patriotic guerrilla, than a band of brigands, it was difficult to tell what such a monster might or might not attempt. In our absence from the post the ruffian would be full master of the neighbourhood. What deed might he not accomplish with impunity, holding his power directly from the unprincipled dictator, whom he was accustomed to imitate as a model, and who would indorse any act of villainy, provided it was the act of one of his own satellites. I shuddered as I reflected.

The reappearance of Ijurra and his band—for I doubted not that his followers were near—their reappearance in that vicinity, and at such a crisis—just as we were being withdrawn—had something ominous in it. They must have known ere this of the plan of campaign designed for the American army. Wheatley's rumour had proved well founded. The new commander-in-chief, Scott, had arrived upon the ground, and three-fourths of the 'army of occupation' had been draughted to form the expedition destined to act upon Vera Cruz. As this greedy general stripped our old favourite 'Rough and Ready' of *only* his best troops, we had the consolation of knowing that the 'rangers' were among the 'picked;' though, for all that, many of us would have preferred remaining with the brave veteran who had already led us so often to victory. I can answer for Wheatley and myself; I might also vouch for Holingsworth, though far different were his motives for wishing to remain on the Rio Grande. His sweetheart was revenge—in his breast long cherished—to his heart faithful and true.

I have said that our design must have been known ere this; indeed the army was already in movement. Troops and brigades were marching upon Brazos, Santiago, and Tampico, there to be embarked for the south, and all that were to go had received their orders. The provinces on the Rio Grande were not to be entirely abandoned, but the army left there was to have its lines contracted, and would therefore cover much less ground. Not only was our little post to be deserted, but the neighbouring town, which had long been the head-quarters of a division, was also to be evacuated. No force of our army would remain within fifty miles of the rancheria; and perhaps no American troop would ever again visit that isolated village. The reflection rendered me more than melancholy.

No doubt of it—the enemy was apprised of our movements. In our special case—that *we* the rangers were to march on the following morning—was well known to the people of the neighbourhood. It had been known to them for several days; and it had not passed unobserved by us that the citizens of the place—those who were not Ayankieados—had lately shewn themselves more sulky and inhospitable, in proportion as the time approached for our departure. This *brusquerie* had led to several street-conflicts, in which knives had been drawn and blood spilled, and much 'bad blood' begotten on both sides.

Another circumstance was not unnoticed amongst us. Ribald pasquinades, rudely written, and accompanied by threats of proscription, were at this time thrust under the doors of such of the citizens as had been friendly to us. Even the alcaldé had received some documents of this character—perhaps emanating from a jealous *tiendero* who had looked with bitter eye upon the courtship of Wheatley and Conchita. It was not till afterwards I learned that similar missives had 'come to hand' in a quarter that more concerned myself.

Some scouted the absurdity of these acts, alleging that they sprung from personal enmity, or originated in the mob-patriotism of the *leperos*. It was not so, as I afterwards learned; the government of the country, or at all events, several of its prominent members, countenanced the meanness; and at their instigation, a 'black list' was made out in every town and village through which the American army had occasion to pass. Let the minister, Señor O——, make answer to this accusation.

I was musing on this disagreeable theme, after my return from the cerro, and endeavouring to sketch out some plan for the safety of my betrothed during my absence; but my thoughts proved barren. With a sort of faint hope that the villain Ijurra might yet fall into our hands, I had despatched Holingsworth—nothing loath for the duty—with a party of rangers upon his trail, and I was impatiently awaiting their return.

The voice of Wheatley aroused me from my reverie.

'Well, lieutenant, what is it?'

'Only that precious boy,' answered he, with a significant smile, at the same time ushering 'Cyprio' into the room.

The lad carried a note, which I opened. A green sprig of juniper was enclosed, and the simple word '*tuya*' was written in pencil. I knew the symbol well. The juniper is *tuya* in that most beautiful of tongues, and *tuya* from a lady signifies 'yours.'

'Anything more?' I asked of the messenger.

'Nothing, Señor Capitan,' answered the intelligent boy; 'only to inquire if you had arrived safe.'

She had been anxious then!

I separated the branchlet into two equal parts: one I placed in my bosom; the other, having fervently kissed, I enclosed in a folded sheet, upon which I wrote the words:

'*Tuyo—tuyo—hasta la muerte!*'

Cyprio bore back my parting message.

At midnight, Holingsworth and his party came in from the scout. Nothing had been seen of the guerrilla.

PROGRESS OF TASMANIA.

Enough has been said of late about the Australians by all manner of people; but as we do not often hear anything on the subject from themselves, here follows a brief summary of what the inhabitants of the Britain of the South, as they fondly call Tasmania, have thought proper to print concerning their own position and prospects. Let us just remark, in passing, that we find no fault with this ambitious appellation; for the island, like our own, has picturesque scenery, excellent harbours, climate and soil suited for agriculture, forests of fine timber, and unlimited deposits of coal, iron-ore, limestone, and so forth.

In March 1851, the total population of Tasmania was 69,187, of whom 34,070 were adult males; 15,996 adult females, and 19,121 children of both sexes. This was about two months before the surprising gold discoveries in the neighbouring colonies, and we see at once what were the consequences. The arrivals during the year numbered 6076; the departures, 6613. In 1852, the arrivals were 15,203; the departures, 21,917. In 1853, there was a pause in this process of depopulation: 14,977 persons came to the island, and 12,684 left it. At the end of this latter year, there was a positive decrease of 23 per cent. in the number of men, and a very sensible disturbing influence on the social and domestic condition of the colony was the result. On the other hand, the number of children had multiplied from 27 per cent. in 1851, to 36 per cent. in 1853—the germ of future increase.

Not less marked is the effect on matrimony: in 1851, the number of marriages was 992; 1213 in 1852; and 1479 in 1853, when the number of the adult population, as seen above, was much diminished. Who does not see in this the return of fortunate diggers from the gold-fields eager to find wives to share their sudden wealth?

We take a look at the convicts: of these, the servile class of the colony, there were, of both sexes, in 1851, 20,069; 19,105 in 1852; and 16.745 in 1853. Here we observe the effect of Her Majesty's Order in Council for the stoppage of transportation to Van Diemen's Land; the number decreases rapidly, and by the time the next census is taken, there will probably be no convicts as a class to enumerate. We find that in August 1854, the total number of convicts was 13,456; of whom 10,174 were earning their own living, and 3282 only were maintained at the government cost. An estimate was then made—the verification of which we have not yet heard of—that 10,000 would be released from their convict condition in April 1856; while of the remainder, more than half would live by their own earnings. In 1854–5, the estimates for convict expenses were L.205,385; and L.132,553 in 1856.

Trade and commerce exhibit returns still more striking. In 1851, the value of the imports was L.641,609; in 1852, L.860,488; in 1853, L.2,273,397; an amazing increase, being at the rate of L.34, 9s. 4½d. per head of the population—an increase only exceeded by that of the colony of Victoria. The exports for the same years amounted respectively to L.665,790, L.1,509,883, L.1,756,316.

The whale-fishing declined wofully in the same period; from 40 colonial and 9 foreign ships, down to 7 and 2; adventurers, instead of chasing leviathans across the ocean, preferred the enterprise and excitement of digging for nuggets. The timber-trade, on the contrary, comes out bravely. In 1844, the value of timber exported was L.3577; in 1853, nearly half a million. The trade suffered, as did many others, in 1851, being L.23,000 under 1850; but the demand for boards, planks, joists, &c., to shelter the thousands of emigrants who poured into Melbourne, sent it up to L.89,000 in 1852, and to the much greater sum in the following year. This was something like prosperity. It lured back to the Tasmanian forests many of the gold-seekers, who found that the gold-fields were, after all, less profitable, and much more precarious, than the rewards offered to steady labour in felling and sawing timber.

Agriculture suffered by the departure of all the farm-labourers who could get away; excepting potatoes, the exports in 1853 were not more than one-seventh of what they were in 1851. By the side of this decrease, it is remarkable that there is no decrease in the quantity of wool exported. There was also a slackening in ship-building, yet the number of steamers plying in the colony increased from two to five.

As regards money, the whole amount of coin in the banks and military-chest, in 1850, was L.239,417; in 1852, it was L.621,419; and in 1853, L.1,375,352—all exclusive of bills of exchange and paper-currency. Taking the average of the population, the bank deposits in 1853 amounted to L.28, 8s. 10d. per head.

The penny-post experiment has proved not less satisfactory at the antipodes than here: the penny rate within the colony and compulsory pre-payment were established in 1853; and in that year the receipts were L.9880, while in 1852, they were L.8303.

Among industrial resources, we find sixty different trades and manufactures carried on in the colony, and here something occurs as to the rate of wages. In 1851, the daily pay of carpenters, masons, and bricklayers was 5s.; in 1853, it was 15s., and a similar increase prevailed in all other trades, somewhat higher in towns than in the country. Simultaneously, there was a great rise in the price of provisions—500 per cent. in some instances; and we are informed that the trebling of wages was 'not so very unreasonable when compared with the enhanced cost of provisions, fuel, and rent, and, indeed, of every article of consumption; and it may be affirmed that a mechanic with a family was much better off with his ordinary wages in the cheap times.'

Again: with the first rush to the Diggings, house-property sunk so much in value, that it could only be sold with difficulty at a nominal price. 'But ere long the streets of Hobart Town and Launceston began to swarm with lucky diggers and numerous visitors—the former bent on enjoying the fruits of their success with their families and friends, and the latter to take up their abode more or less permanently, attracted by our superior climate, and our more quiet and better protected towns.' The consequence was a scramble for houses, and a rise of 400 per cent. in rents. The number of houses in the colony in 1848 was 7629; in 1851, it was 11,844.

Just one word about the climate, by way of conclusion. The mean temperature near Hobart Town, deduced from ten years' observations, is 52·81; and the mean rain-fall for the same period nearly 21 inches annually, which differs but little from the mean annual rain-fall of London.

The Britain looked down on by the Southern Cross is thus seen to afford matter for reflection and instruction to the Britain over which the Great Bear casts his eye. In addition to the points of resemblance enumerated at the outset, the former has a Royal Society, active and learned, from whose *Proceedings* the facts and particulars have been derived for the present article.

LIFE RETURNING;

AFTER WAR-TIME.

O Life, dear life, with sunbeam finger touching
This poor damp brow, or flying freshly past
On wings of mountain winds, or claspèd fast
In links of visionary embraces, clutching
Me from the yawning grave—
Can I believe thou yet hast power to save?

I see thee, O my life, like phantom giant,
Stand on the hill-top, large against the dawn;
Upon the night-black clouds retreating drawn;
In aspect wonderful, with hope defiant,
And so majestic grown,
I scarce discern the image as my own.

Those mists lift off, and through the vale resplendent
Behold the pathway of my years prolong!
Not without labour, yet for labour strong;
Not without pain, but pain sublimed, transcendent,
That by divinest laws
Heart unto heart, and all hearts upwards, draws.

O life, O love—your diverse tones bewildering
Make silence, like two meeting waves of sound,
And force a lull in this world's noisy round:
I dream of wifely white arms, lisp of children—
Never of ended wars,
Save kisses sealing honourable scars.

Peace! No more battles: save the combat glorious
To which all earth and heaven do witness stand:
The sword o' the spirit taking in my hand,
I shall go forth, for in new fields victorious
The King yet grants that I
His servant live, or His good soldier die.

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THE FICTIONIST'S WORLD.

FICTIONISTS usually profess to paint the world as it is —to 'hold the mirror up to nature;' but it is certain they do not, and highly doubtful whether they could. It seems to be felt as necessary in a novel to assume the existence of men both better and worse than are commonly found in the ordinary world; also, that the reader will approve of views in social philosophy contrary to those he sanctions and acts upon in his daily life. The matter appears puzzling at first, for one would *à priori* suppose that a true counterfeit presentment of life was most likely to give the amusement which we look for in a work of fiction. Account for it as we please, the fact undoubtedly is so, that there is a traditionary set of characters for the drama and the novel, readily recognisable as such, and standing quite apart from the actual people we meet with in society; likewise, a peculiar way of treating them and making them work, as conventional as common life, but considerably different.

Everybody will at once understand what is here meant, after he shall have seen a few illustrations.

In the actual world, as we well know, there is always a presumption in favour of people of wealth and station. If a society of a philanthropic nature is looking out for a set of directors whose names may give it respectability, it does not willingly adopt poor or obscure men. It takes men who are known to stand well with their bankers. If the said directors are called upon to consider the cases of certain applicants, whose certificates will they regard as the most to be depended on? Not those of poor obscure people, but those of men of substance and social distinction. When individuals of any rank whatever are choosing guardians for their children, or trustees to manage their estates, do they choose the poorest of their acquaintances for the duty? No, they select the very richest friends they have. Even in a case of evidence as to a simple matter of fact, suppose a gentleman testifies to one thing, and a poor person to another, shall we not find that the former is preferred almost without a moment of hesitation? Now, I think it may be fairly assumed that men would not proceed upon these principles in matters affecting their interests, unless experience had satisfied them that the principles are correct, and consequently safe. It is not that every poor man is held as necessarily dishonest or unveracious, or every rich man the reverse. We can readily understand it to arise from simply this consideration, that, supposing the natural tendencies of rich and poor to be equal, there is an influence in education, exemption from small temptations, fear of disgrace, and other circumstances, as affecting the wealthy, which is not to be looked for in equal force among the poor—and no discredit to them that it is so.

With the novelist, all this is reversed. In his narrative, the presumption is always in favour of the poorer party. Ten to one, the rich man is a grasping oppressor, and the poor one a noble fellow, a pattern of all the virtues both of his own and other classes, only unfortunate in suffering unjustly under his long-pursed neighbour. Very often the whole interest of the story depends on bringing some paragon of righteous poverty through frightful difficulties placed in his path by iniquitous opulence. I do not say that such circumstances are impossible, or that they never occur; I do not profess either to extol the rich or depreciate the poor. I merely remark, that when men of any grade whatever deliberate for a selection of persons to be intrusted with any important charge, they act upon an assumption exactly the opposite. They judge of men as bankers judge of them, which is precisely the reverse of the way they are judged of by the fictionist.

The fictionist makes a kind of acknowledgment that wealth is regarded with deference in the actual world, but sees in this nothing but a mean spirit of mammon-worship. Very likely, in his own actual life, he finds that poor friends are able to do him little service, and very often require loans from his purse, if he has one; while rich people give good dinners, are surrounded with objects gratifying to good taste, never require to lay his purse under contribution, sometimes can say a good word for him with dispensers of patronage, and are altogether persons whom it is useful to him to know. Such are, at least, the experiences of ordinary mortals in the world, and, while they have needs and appetites, they will continue to be actuated by such considerations. One does not see, in actual society, any great occasion to declaim about a matter so simple and so natural. In the novel, however, it is a great and prevailing sin, never enough to be condemned. There the writer who himself practises it, turns it into every conceivable form of ridicule for the gratification of readers who never think of acting upon any other principle.

And see how this works itself out in the special characters. In the real world, we are continually meeting with self-raised men, who display cultivated taste and good-manners, and who make a generous and rational use of their wealth. You will generally find, too, in such men, a moderation of tone in perfect keeping with their original humility, and anything but a disposition to overlook or slight old friends. In the novelist's world, I need scarcely remind you how the new rich man is described—from M. Jourdain to

Mr Bounderby, nothing but a vulgar, purse-proud fool. This is the more unreasonable, since there is nothing the fictionist is more solicitous about than to bring windfalls of fortune to poor men. Are we to understand that men are only respectable while poor, and become fools and tyrants when enriched. If so, can our novelist be justified in enriching anybody?

It seems specially the delight of fiction to take up merit in lowliness and distress, and exhibit it pressing on through all difficulties to brilliant results. An obscure and nameless adventurer, who can sketch, and has no letters of introduction, that is the type of a novelist's favourite. He becomes prescriptively interesting in appearance, and by right of ancient usage, obtains, at a first and chance interview, the affections of the nasty rich gentleman's daughter. In actual good society, it is universally held as very naughty conduct in a young lady, when she opens her ears to lovers unrecognised as respectable persons by her papa and mamma; and there are plenty of reasons in morals and good taste why this view should be taken of the case. But in fiction, it seems to be supposed that nothing else will excite sympathy and interest. There, an approvable, above-board lover, who was making L.1500 a year at the bar or as manager of a company, would never do. I have sometimes thought of making a collection of all the Belvilles, Altamonts, and Delacours who have been the heroes of novelists from first to last, in order to see if there was a single quality or circumstance about any of them such as a decent father might, could, or should have approved of. My belief is they would have all been found wanting in the first elements of eligibility. If such be the case, it is a mere mockery to ask gravely if fiction can be considered as representing human life.

Perhaps we may go a little further, and say there are connections of characters and circumstances frequently occurring in actual life, but which, though they are by no means devoid of interest in their own way, fiction never has taken, and never will take up. In the annals of law-courts, it is quite as common for the poor as for the rich man to be in the position of a persecutor. A man in difficulties imagines himself possessed of some claim upon a neighbour of substance, or, what is quite as serviceable, sees some chance of turning a quirk of the law in his favour, against the said neighbour, so as to extort a sum of money. With the aid of some inferior practitioner, he will raise an action, and put his substantial adversary to no small trouble and expense, not to speak of irritation of mind. Here there is a necessary injustice on the side of the plaintiff, for, whether he loses or gains his action, he will pay nothing, having nothing wherewithal to pay; so that the opposite party must at least lose the amount of his expenses. Such things occur every day, being simply speculative assaults of one set of men upon the property of another; and it is obvious that they must often involve curious circumstances, and many distressful emotions. But fiction knows well that any such case in its pages would wholly fail of effect.

Fiction, then, is not and cannot be a true reflex of life. Nor are the reasons, perhaps, discreditable either to the writers or their readers. In the actual world, we must be guided by worldly rules and maxims, or we perish. There is therefore no thought of a practical dissent from our social morality. But we at the same time see in social things much that leaves us unsatisfied, and the accidents which make one man rich and another poor, are of the number. We are all glad, occasionally, to be rapt away into an ideal world, where good is dealt out on a different principle, where obscurity is no impediment to merit, where the woes of poverty are redressed, where natural qualities, albeit external, assert a superiority over those which fortune has conferred, where the conventional is overruled by the impulses of the heart. It refreshes us to be made, even for a moment, to believe in such a system of things. For, though we may in reason acknowledge that, on the whole, things are well ordered in this world, still the evils that remain unremedied, and which, apparently, can never be wholly avoided, make a painful impression on us. Fiction, as by a charm, puts all to rights. It gives us the scheme of providence we should ourselves have chosen. Here, at least, we are at liberty to act—for we act with the actors—as our best feelings would dictate, however otherwise our practice must needs be in the real world.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The reader has been conducted through a history—such as it is—of American slavery, and been made acquainted with some prominent features in its character. He perceives that, as a carefully nourished institution, it imparts a tone to the whole social system of the United States, interweaves itself with the national constitution, laws, usages, sentiments, the most vital principles of public polity.

Though marvellous in many respects, this institution has not seemingly attained its full proportions. It is still growing. Sixty-seven years ago, under a million—now approaching five millions—soon there will be ten millions of human beings in the condition of 'chattels personal'—a nation of slaves within a nation of freemen, a people dangerous in their numbers and sense of wrongs, dangerous as an engine of intestine discord, in the event of hostilities with an unscrupulous foreign enemy.

Can no practicable measures be devised to arrest this monster evil in its desolating course? We may be better able to reply to this inquiry after glancing at the causes which have conspired to bring about present results.

First, and at the foundation of the whole mischief, lie the provisions of the federal constitution, which, as formerly shewn, pledge the whole states to maintain slavery inviolate in any individual state where it exists—which authorise a method of representation in the House of Representatives, based on a certain numerical proportion of slaves; whereby the southern faction gains thirty votes—and which, by giving national efficacy to a fugitive slave law, bring the whole country within the operation of southern institutions.

Practically, the constitution of the United States is incapable of change. To amend it, there would need to be a very effective rousing of public feeling throughout the various states. Congress must be besieged with petitions—which would have little effect, constituted as that body now is. Supposing this difficulty to be overcome, a proposal for amendment must be concurred in by two-thirds of both branches of congress—hopeless. Supposing this difficulty also overcome, conventions to take the matter into consideration must be called by the legislatures of the several states. Lastly, the decision of the conventions must be ratified by three-fourths of the states; by which is inferred the consent of six of the slave states—hopeless. To all appearance, therefore, reform is constitutionally impossible.

Second. With such constitutional advantages in its favour, as well as by superior address, the southern party has obtained such political supremacy, as enables it to secure northern votes. Having thus a majority in congress, it has from time to time, by legislative measures, extended slavery over newly acquired territories; and judging from recent elections, it has now a greater power of doing so than ever.

Third. Northern selfishness, by which freedom and independence are bartered for place, pay, commercial monopoly, and other material interests.

Fourth—although this might almost be placed first—There is the universal desire to support the Union, which, having attained great eminence and glory, is, right or wrong, idolised to a very extraordinary degree.

Fifth. Fears of destroying this object of worship, along with the blinding effects of political partisanship, produce a Public Opinion that acts despotically in suppressing freedom of speech; wherefore, all who express a detestation of slavery, and agitate for its restriction or extinction, are proscribed as 'abolitionists'—a name, in popular acceptation, synonymous with everything that is infamous.

Sixth. The propagation of corrupt doctrines by religious teachers of almost every denomination, to the effect that slavery is an institution beneficently designed by Providence for the spiritual welfare of its victims. And along with this agency may be classed the dissemination of pro-slavery sentiments, and the ridicule of anti-slavery efforts, by a great part of the press, which takes its tone from Public Opinion.

Seventh. The prejudice respecting colour throughout the greater part of the free states; and the notion, generally, that the negro is from nature of an inferior and servile race.

Eighth. The continually growing demand for cotton, before which every consideration of humanity, or dread of consequences, disappears.

Some other causes might be assigned; as, for example, party violence by mobs at elections, by which quietly disposed and respectable persons are driven from the field of politics, and power handed over to those who aim as much at selfish ends as the public advantage. And then, to account for these scenes of violence, as well as for much newspaper abuse, we might allude to the strange practice of discharging almost all government-officers and appointing new ones, according to political changes, by which a state of disorder is kept up in the country by all classes of office-seekers.

Out of this complication of causes, we leave any one to say how American slavery is to be alleviated. Congress has only a power of restraining it from entering the territories—and even this power is not undisputed. Slavery can be legally abolished only by the separate action of each individual state; and within each slave state there exists a dominating power, apparently impervious to any reasonable proposition on the subject. Not even the respective legislatures of these states could relax the slave code, without a very general consent of the people. In the matter of slavery, Vigilance Committees are above all law. And measures for emancipation, supposing them attempted, might be followed by revolution.

It is not to be supposed that an evil so conspicuous, so fraught with probabilities of mischief, and, to say the least of it, so damaging to the character of those by whom it is cherished, should have escaped the notice of Americans. But unfortunately, it has never attained the position of a public or generally discussed question—it seems as though an impression prevailed that nothing could be made of it, or that for certain reasons it was improper to speak of it at all. Slavery, in short, is a kind of tabooed subject in the States. It is not an agreeable thing to think of, certainly not to talk about.

When tourists, in their curiosity to arrive at the truth, refer to this grievous evil, they find little to put in their note-book. The best they get is the pious remark, 'that slavery is one of those sad evils which will doubtless pass away in God's own good time.' And, thus, worthy people consoling themselves with a highly edifying sentiment, go placidly to sleep, and leave slavery to take its chance. It must be deemed odd that this great people, renowned for their shrewdness, should for any reason shrink from the open discussion of a social question which so intimately concerns their welfare. 'Abolition' haunts them like a spectre. Let us have a look at this terrible apparition.

A number of years ago, there sprung up anti-slavery societies, differing considerably in their views. Some of the older associations have disappeared, others with more vitality have become permanent. The American Anti-slavery Society, located at New York, takes the lead among existing institutions. Massachusetts has several associations in vigorous operation, the chief one, as we believe, being called the Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society, which began in 1882, and holds annual festivals of much oratorical importance. This society was formed 'on the ground of the Absolute Sin of Slaveholding, and the Duty of Immediate and Unconditional Emancipation.' The president is William Lloyd Garrison; and among the office-bearers or adherents are other leading abolitionists—Wendell Phillips, Samuel May, Edmund Quincey, Maria M. Chapman, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, and Theodore Parker. The abolitionists, represented by these and similar societies, will make no compromise on the subject of slavery; nor do they design to work through religious or political organisations. They declare, there is an inherent wickedness in slavery, with which there can be no association. It is not clear to us from their writings what is their plan for effecting 'immediate emancipation.' We presume, they merely insist that the whole of the slaves should be instantly liberated, without compensation to owners, and without any preparation, educational or otherwise, for the enjoyment of freedom. A number of the members are Non-resistants—a class of persons who repudiate the federal constitution, and decline to take any part in elections. Those who entertain these ultra views, desire to dissolve the Union, in order to be entirely rid of any connection with the South.

Next comes the Liberty party, which also advocates immediate emancipation, but does not think so badly of the constitution, and accordingly is opposed to a dissolution of the Union. Its members do not withdraw from their church relations, on account of slavery, and hope to effect their purposes by moderate means. Many of the party are connected with societies, which rely on the diffusion of religious knowledge in the South as one of the best plans for promoting anti-slavery sentiments in that quarter.

We believe the Liberty party is now pretty nearly swallowed up in the new Republican party. Europeans have heard much lately of the Republicans, and it is interesting to know what really is their anti-slavery doctrine. Properly speaking, they are not abolitionists at all. No doubt, many members would wish immediate emancipation, and their papers and orations in favour of liberty are unexceptionable. But the members generally are only Free-soilers. They disclaim any intention of meddling with slavery where it exists, and will be satisfied with seeing it kept out of the territories, which would doubtless be a great point gained. They do not advocate a dissolution of the Union; though it is not unlikely, should other projects fail, that they will come to that. They have confident anticipations of carrying Fremont as president in 1860, and live on in this hope. To this great political organisation belong Charles Sumner, Hall, Giddings, Chase, Henry Ward Beecher, Seward, and Horace Greeley.

Finally, we might mention the party called Union-savers, represented by Fillmore, who look upon slavery as a bad thing in principle, but deprecate all agitation on the subject. By lending themselves politically to the democrats, they sink the question of slavery altogether, and serve materially to impose that restraint on free opinion which is so injurious to the cause of freedom.

It will be observed that among these parties there is only one entitled to be called true abolitionists; all the others postponing the question of emancipation, or subordinating it to certain political and religious considerations.

As a reason for persecuting abolitionists, it has been alleged that their object is to stir up mischief in the South; that by means of tracts and other agencies, they endeavour to spread incendiary doctrines, and place the owners of slaves in constant danger of insurrection and loss of property. It is further alleged, that the laws against teaching slaves to read, are a consequence of these attempts to promote discontent through the press; and that the proceedings of abolitionists generally having greatly exasperated the slaveholders, the condition of slaves was now very much worse than if there had been no abolition movement. There is perhaps some truth, but also some error, in these statements.

It may, we think, be candidly admitted that the ultra-abolitionists—like the old English Puritans and the Scotch Covenanters—take extreme views of the subject, are rather intractable, and from conscientious but not extensively appreciated motives, do not scruple to denounce what they consider to be a great national sin. Thus, they give offence. Their language is occasionally coarse and irreverent. For example, one of Garrison's common expressions is, that 'the United States constitution is a Covenant with Death, and an Agreement with Hell'—an abuse of Scriptural phraseology not exactly accordant with modern notions. It may be also allowed that the anti-slavery cause has been sullied by unseemly party differences, and that, assuming the worst qualities of sectarians, its adherents have too often demonstrated a spirit of intolerance and persecution.

Whatever may have been the opinions entertained respecting abolitionist doctrines, the time has come when they must be spoken of at least in terms of extenuation. The occurrences of the last twelve months have immeasurably advanced the anti-slavery cause in the minds of Europeans; and we may add, that on the relative situation of abolitionists and slaveholders a new and more distinct light has been thrown. The recent declaration by leading organs in the South, that slavery was there and there for ever—that no plan of emancipation would be listened to—that slavery is a natural and proper institution—that free society has been a failure—that the whole free coloured and poor white population of the States should be reduced to perpetual bondage—that the foreign slave-trade ought to be revived—together with eulogies on slavery by the Governors of a state, and also by a President of the United States—declarations by the highest authorities that there is an inherent vitality in slavery which will insure its illimitable growth; and a distinct avowal of the design to absorb new countries for the sake of protecting and greatly extending the institution—these extraordinary announcements, along with the unprovoked and unredressed outrages committed by Missourians in Kansas, the brutal assault of Brooks on Mr Sumner, not to speak of other barbarities, defended and gloried in—all this, we say, entirely alters the aspect under which we are to view the operations of the abolitionists. As long as the world was under the impression that a calm consideration of emancipation was postponed in consequence of the intemperate harangues of what were deemed a body of fanatics, the slaveholders commanded that degree of sympathy which was thought to be due to their undesired and very unfortunate situation. But now, with the facts before us, we are at a loss to see how the matter is to be treated in the same indulgent spirit.

Lamenting the past rudeness with which abolitionists have pressed their opinions—believing they would have more successfully promoted their aims by using milder persuasives—persons of enlarged views will join us in looking beyond the Faneuil Hall and Exeter Hall aspect of the anti-slavery cause. This cause is not to be regarded merely as it affects the blacks, but the whites—not merely the South, but the North—not merely the United States, but the whole family of mankind. All the communities on earth are interested in the solution of this mighty question—which, like other social questions of any consequence, has had to pass primarily through the hands of agitators who care little for conventional respectabilities. The question, we apprehend, has now got beyond the narrow sphere of anti-slavery societies. Supposing that the whole of the associations were dissolved and done with, that no such men as Garrison, Wendell Phillips, or Sumner were in existence, we return to general principles, and hope it will not be thought intrusive, if we ask the American people to be so good as explain, *what they propose to do with four millions of negro slaves and their progeny?*

Abolition principles are said to be making progress in the North. The protracted struggle in Kansas affords evidence of a desire somewhere, to outflank slavery on its own ground. Still there is a universal disinclination to meddle with southern institutions. Admitting that an important end would be gained by excluding slavery from Kansas, is there not the great south and south-west at disposal? From Texas and New Mexico, a number of new slave states may be carved out. We are aware that by the more sanguine class of American writers, it is confidently believed that Mexico, peopled as it is by mixed breeds hostile to American usages, will form an impregnable barrier to slavery in the south-west. How like one of the delusive fancies ordinarily indulged on the subject! With power in the hands of the pro-slavery party, and under a pressure for labour, the absorption of Mexico, Central America, and Cuba, is only a question of time and expediency. The very mixture of breeds in Mexico invites aggression. To meet the growing scarcity and costliness of negroes, there lies in that doomed country ample material at hand, ready for seizure and interstate deportation. For anything the present generation can tell, the South, Mexico included, may, some hundreds of years hence, form a great free republic of blacks, the refuge of oppressed colour. Such, indeed, is likely to be the case; but before that era comes round, what suffering, what convulsions, what bloodshed!

Slavery, we repeat, is seemingly destined to push far beyond its present limits. Is no check practicable?

The Constitution—it can do nothing.

The Republicans—they possess little political power; and, besides, they propose to act solely through the constitution.

The North—the majority of its representatives faithless; confidence in politicians gone.

The Anti-slavery Societies—a scattered body, with unfashionable views, and no political weight.

Enlightened Opinion—suppressed by mob violence and outvoted; the less opulent and more numerous classes being democrats, and supporters of the slave power.

The South—resolute in maintaining its institutions, and master of the situation.

Patience: the next decennial census will add to the number of members in congress from the free states; the free states will be increased in number by Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, and Washington—perhaps so much the worse; more democratic votes, more political manœuvring, more slavery?

There exists a hope of modifying slavery, by a diversion of the cotton-trade from America, and by a removal of protective duties. A falling off in the demand for American cotton, by lessening the demand for negroes, would affect the slave-breeding states, and dispose them to adopt freedom. By the removal of protection, the present compact between North and South would be greatly shaken. The former point is for the consideration of Englishmen; the latter for that of Americans.

There is another hope to which we may call attention. It is the possibility of creating a free state in Western Texas, by means of the German and other European immigrants who have settled in that slave section of the Union. Whether the Free-soilers may here be able to outflank slavery, is doubtful; but the attempt will be made, and the people of England need not be surprised to learn that the outrages by slave-holders in Kansas are re-enacted on a scale of greater desperation near the shores of the Gulf of Mexico.

We would not willingly resign our faith in the capacity of Americans for overcoming dangers and difficulties. They possess a wonderful power of rallying when things are at their worst. Some grand movement, inspired by virtuous indignation and despair, may dislodge the oligarchy which controls public policy on the slave question. New Washingtons, Franklins, and Quincey Adamses may arise, to sustain the cause of freedom, now basely pronounced to be a failure. It is consoling to know that sudden and unforeseen changes for the better take place in the social as in the physical atmosphere. Luther's reformation was precipitated by the sale of some paltry indulgences. The fear of abolitionism, which now, like a superstition, hangs over the United States, preventing the dispassionate consideration of a subject of momentous concern, may, from some unforeseen cause, be speedily and happily dispelled.

Looking at matters as they stand, however, making every allowance for contingencies, we sorrowfully admit that these events do not seem probable. To be quite plain: there appear—at least on the surface—to be but two expedients, by which this fearfully embarrassed question is to be solved—Revolution, Insurrection, both to be earnestly deprecated.

Lately, apart from the old-school abolitionists, there have sprung up societies in Massachusetts and other quarters, with the distinctly professed object of dissolving the Union; in order that the free states may no longer be associated with, or made responsible for, slave institutions. Which states are to be disunited, these societies do not mention; that apparently being left to chance. They expect to operate through petitions to congress—hopeless. The law, under the constitution, by peaceful means, is against them; and with the universally prevailing respect for the Union, which with Americans is a kind of sub-religion, we do not imagine that the doctrines of the Disunionists will meet with wider acceptance than those of the Abolitionists, of which they are only a new version.

By writers who have taken notice of this new movement, Disunion is disapproved of, on the ground that if effected, slavery would be maintained with greater vigour in the South; they even speculate on the probability of some millions of abject whites in the southern states being made slaves. We think differently. The withdrawal of the northern states from the confederacy, whether peacefully or by armed force, would so shake and weaken the whole fabric of southern institutions, that an insurrection by the slaves would be inevitable—slavery would dissolve in a sea of blood.

The South knows this. It has often, in its vaunting and reckless mode of speaking, threatened to quit the Union. Let it try.

Feeling its power, the North, if true to itself and animated by higher motives, could in a short space of time extinguish slavery. It could say to the South: 'Unless you proceed to follow our example, and make provision for the gradual emancipation of your slaves, the partnership between us must be dissolved; we must quit the confederacy, and be to you in future a foreign country.' A resolute but friendly address in these terms from an aggregate convention of free states is what civilisation would point to, instead of a resort to arms. But what a glow of patriotism—what an arousing of sensibilities—what a casting forth of selfishness—what a disruption of venerated traditions—what an enlightening of the masses—must ensue before the North assumes this grand attitude! It will not do so. The execution of the threat would be Revolution.

A declaration of independence by Massachusetts, or any other single state, is equally, if not more improbable; for that would be equivalent to civil war—an issue not likely to be contemplated. We would not, however, say, with any certainty, that Massachusetts would tamely submit to a *very* lengthened repetition of the indignities to which it has latterly been subjected by federal agencies. Spectators at a distance wait with some interest to see which is to be the last outrage that is to revive the spirit of Bunker's Hill.

The consideration of pacific adjustment being deliberately rejected, and Disunion, Revolution, or Civil War abjured—the case is not mended. Slavery goes on uninterruptedly in its course. The sore spreads, festers, and the longer a corrective is delayed, the disease becomes worse, the danger more imminent.

One trembles at the fatal alternative: Revolution—Insurrection. Can insurrection be avoided either way? Revolution would produce insurrection. Successful insurrection would be followed by revolution; for we can scarcely expect that the North would remain in union with a nation of blacks.

But while the whole federal power may be brought to suppress revolt, how can the slaves be successful in insurrection? War with one of the great European powers would furnish the means at once! God forbid that we should advocate such a crisis; but the history we have been tracing leads the mind, however reluctantly, to such a possibility; and it is impossible to avoid seeing that events are within the range even of probability which would render insurrection, if it occurred, not only formidable, but successful. If these pages awaken, before it is too late, some of the more powerful minds of America to the catastrophe to which, in the eyes of dispassionate observers, the history of their country seems tending, I shall not have written in vain.* W. C.

THE SOFT-HEARTED POSTMAN.

Very true, sir, *as* you say; there are many more young lads employed as postmen than a few years ago. But how can you wonder at it, when you consider how the business has been degraded, sir! How could it be expected that men like me, who for years have taken an interest in their business, should be content to shove letters into boxes at the very doors that used to open so briskly to them! No, sir, it was more than my human nature, at anyrate, could stand; and, bad as trade is, I'd fifty times rather die selling greens and new-laid eggs—when I've got them—than go rat-tatting down the street putting letters into boxes!

Well, sir, *I* can't see the saving of time, always excepting the houses of the haristocracy, and pretty nigh all them had boxes before the general order was issued. But I don't mean them. Where I felt the injury of the boxes, was in the comfortable easy-going kind of houses, or in the four delivery-a-day districts; pretty houses that kept their two or three servants, yet where the young ladies weren't too high to rush to the door before the servant could come and take the letters. Bless you, sir, boxes ain't no convenience at such houses; *I* was never kept waiting; and you'll see the difference of putting letters into a pretty white hand, which often belonged to a sweet face, and shoving them into a hole. Ugh! no wonder I couldn't stand it!

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* The reader having now before him the salient points of a very important question, we must refer him for the rest of the author's speculations, and the statistics that bear upon the subject, to a volume just published, entitled *Slavery and Colour in America*, by William Chambers, author of *Things as they are in America*, &c.

Yes, sir, I thought you'd understand the feeling. Besides, when a man has been long on one beat, he soon gets to know the sort of letters that are liked best, those that one doesn't care for, and those blue, thin, common papery ones that people would much rather be without. A man who takes an interest in his letters even gets to know certain handwritings; and when I was a young chap—not bad-looking either—many's the turn I've given the pretty faces watching me round a square. If I got in my sorting a letter, the very brother to lots I had been delivering at one house for a month past—bold free writing, but with a loving touch about the name, *always* Miss, and a fine firm seal—I used to put it last in my packet, and go past the house where a pretty face was watching me behind the blind, and so right round the square. When I got back, the pretty face was still watching me, only with an anxious clouded look; and then I'd give a start, and run up the steps, as though I had just discovered it; and the door would open suddenly before I reached it, and—oh, how I did long to stop and see her read it! But one grows softer-hearted as one grows older: at least I did.

Oh, of course, sir, we are not always welcome; and many a time I have seen calm faces that did not seem expecting anything, change to such a deadly pale, when I handed in a black-edged letter. I had a habit of touching my hat at such times; *they* didn't often see it; but it did no one any harm, and used to do me good, I think. Then, as I grew older, and saw a face at the window that couldn't bear much waiting, that looked *real* anxious, I got into a way of not looking at her if I had letters for the house, and not *the* one. If I did not look at her, I had to wait till the servant came; but if I looked up quick, I used to hear the little feet come through the hall; and sometimes I got what I've heard called a grateful look—and yet *I* didn't write the letters. Of course they weren't all so kind as that. Some used to take the letters as though they were pieces of wood. I've heard the feet come flying along the hall, and then the door would open slowly, and the letter be received as if it were no manner of consequence. Well, of course, I had my laugh at that when I had got away. No, the only boxes I knew at such houses were Christmas-boxes, and capital ones they were, and given cheerfully too. I suppose grand people are too high to care for their letters like that, or else how they can bear to have them commented upon, and handed about from one servant to another, and at last served up all stale on a silver waiter, I can't think. I know their ways from a sister of mine who has lived in high families. Why, letters treated like that, ain't no better than my greens when they've been handled all day—they lose all their crispness.

Well, sir, I can't wholly agree with you there: there *was* interest in the city business, and a fearful one sometimes. Not so much of the softer kind; though I *have* seen young chaps fire up red-hot when I handed in a dainty little white note along with the blue ones. But I've seen merchants set their teeth, and draw their breath hard, as they tore open letters that were to carry life or death, as ruin or success followed their ventures. Ah, I've seen many a sad scene in the city; because it's easy to guess what you don't see, from what you do. I remember well a house in one of the narrow city-lanes, where the office was on the ground-floor, and the rest was a private house—a small one; altogether not more than ten rooms, I should say; but there were only five people, a gentleman and his daughter, and three servants. The clerks—there were four of them—had nothing to do with upstairs. The young lady *was* a lady, and no mistake; rather small, with beautiful fair hair, and dark blue eyes, with such a mouth—ah, she was pretty—and always dressed in such light pretty muslins, that I remember I used to wonder how she kept them so clean in the smoky city. I used to wonder, too, why she lived there, instead of in her proper place out in the country, for they were rich enough then for that; but I heard from an old crony, that she was the last of a large family, and had left a nice place they had in Surrey, to come and live in the city, that she might be more with her father. Of course, I did not like her the less for that. How I got to see her, was in this way. I came at last to go up the first pair of stairs pretty regular every day, with one of those letters I've been talking of, only somehow, I never quite liked the writing: there was a stroke now and then slipped out in the direction, more than in the name, that used to make me think him a *hard* one; and the sweet lady, like many another, soon got a habit of opening the door for me. I went on in this way pretty nigh three months, and had noticed during that time the old gentleman looking paler and more anxious than usual; when one day, I handed him in his letters, and then began my usual tramp up stairs. As I came down again, I happened to look through the glass door, when I saw the poor gentleman had fallen back in his chair, with the blood gushing out of his mouth, and a letter, that had fallen from his hand, lying open on the floor. All the clerks seemed out, for he was alone, so I went in; and before I called any one from up stairs, I took the letter, folded it up, and as his desk was locked, put it in my pocket. It was a bold thing to do, certainly; but the feeling came strong over me that the crash had come, and that it would be better none of the clerks should see that letter. Then I went up stairs, and with a single knock, that sounded queer to me then, told the servant, who, I suppose, told her mistress as well as she could. Of course there was great confusion and sending for doctors, and I could not get a minute to give the letter to the poor young lady; besides, I did not dare stay longer, for I had half my letters to deliver; so away I went with the letter in my pocket, and many a sour look, and word too, I got for being so late that morning.

You may suppose, sir, I felt very uncomfortable till I had done, for I thought if the old gentleman came to his senses, and asked for the letter, and they knew nothing about it, it would spoil all, and make him worse. As soon as I could get done, I went and asked to see the young lady, for I was determined to give it only to her. They seemed to think it strange; but at last she came, looking so grave, but very quiet; and I told her, poor dear, as well as I could, as I gave her the letter, and said where I had found it, that I was afraid the news contained in it had made her father break the blood-vessel, and inquired if he had asked for it. She said no: he was not allowed to speak; but he seemed very anxious about something, and kept entreating her with his eyes. So I told her, if I might make so bold, I thought she had better say to him she had the letter safe, and no one had seen it. She asked, in a sort of maze, what did I think could be in the letter to make him ill, and why had I taken it. Well, I saw she had not a suspicion of what was coming on her, and so I just said that business sometimes went wrong, and perhaps something had happened to trouble the old gentleman; and she seemed so forlorn-like, that I could not help asking her if she hadn't better write and ask some aunt or cousin to come and stay with her. It was a great liberty, and I often wondered how

I could do it; but she seemed to take it quite naturally, and said no; there was no one she could ask, and she could manage very well; she—and she hesitated a little—had a kind friend. Well, sir, the news of the failure did not get abroad for a week, and I think that week of quiet saved the poor gentleman; and for that week I still went regularly up stairs with the letter to comfort the young lady; but the day of the failure I went up as usual, from habit, and not till my hand was at the knocker did I see there was no letter. I snatched my hand away, as if the knocker were fire, and slunk down the stairs as softly as I could, for it came upon me all at once. I knew then, for certain, that he *was* a hard one, and was so ashamed of him, that I could not bear all that day to think of the young lady. Next morning, though I was almost sure how it would be, I looked quite anxiously for a letter, and, as I expected, there was none. At the end of a week, as I was sorting, I came on a great thick packet in his writing, and then I saw it was indeed all over. They were her letters—pretty loving ones, I am sure—which the scoundrel had sent her back. Well, sir, I was getting old then, as I said before, and I was such a fool, that for the life of me, I could not make up my mind to take them that delivery. However, I found waiting only made bad worse, besides it was against the rules; so the next time I went and gave, I'm afraid, a very poor knock, for I was dreading she might come, as I had heard the old gentleman was better. And there she was when the door opened; and when I tried to hold out the packet as if it were nothing, she—I shall never so long as I live forget her face—took them more steadily than I gave them, and quietly shut the door; but, poor dear, I heard the sob for all that. I never saw her after: they went away out of my beat; and though I have often asked, I never could get news of them.

Yes, sir, it's very true, postmen used to see something of life, but that's all over *now*. I don't suppose I could do much for you in the greenery line; but if you'd patronise my new-laid eggs, I've got some Cochin-Chinas that I expect will lay regular all the winter, and I'll be proud to supply you, sir.

PATENT WARFARE.

I FIND it extremely amusing to follow the monthly revelations of the *Mechanics' Magazine*, touching what is doing in the world of science. It is true I often meet with matters too deep for me, and abstruse calculations which I do not even attempt to follow; but I turn with infinite pleasure to the monthly list of new patents for 'inventions and improvements.' There I dive into the very arcana of progress, and feel great satisfaction in reflecting that no one can keep his *secrets* from me, even if he chooses to secure to himself, by patent, the pecuniary advantages of them, with which, in fact, I have no desire to interfere.

It was in this way I came, last month, upon something in the way of invention, which so far transcends all my previous ideas of the legitimate functions and usual operations of the Patent Office, that I cannot resist the temptation of setting down a few observations upon it.

The subject to which I allude is neither more nor less than a proposed patent for war; I say, 'for war;' because, if everything goes on, as usual in such cases, according to the 'specification,' no other sort of warfare but that carried on under the patent will be available or possible.

I have sometimes thought that the specification, by which each intending patentee is obliged to declare what it is he purposes securing to himself exclusively, ought, if possible, to be kept secret at least for a time. It would have been peculiarly desirable in this case; because the gentleman seeking to secure the exclusive right to destroy his fellow-creatures by wholesale—to smother whole armies, and to burn whole fleets 'with certainty and dispatch,' cannot, unfortunately, obtain his object without in the very act disclosing to the whole world how this work of extermination is to be accomplished. The application for this patent was actually 'hushed up' during the war, 'lest its publication should prove detrimental to Her Majesty's service;' but it is now brought forward again, and, as I say, the murder is out with a vengeance. No human power can now recall the sound of trumpet which has gone forth, or snatch from the lips of mankind the fruit of this deadly tree of knowledge. It is now patent to all, that with a few barrels, more or less, of naphtha, and a few pills of potassium, fortified places must be abandoned by the bravest and most resolute defenders; fleets, no matter how numerous, powerful, or well-manned, must be speedily enveloped in devouring flames, which all the waters of the sea cannot extinguish; and even armies on dry land can be shewn that there is a fire which their fire surpasses, as much as that of the hero of Blackheath did that of the chemists.

Nothing can be more curious than the dry, scientific mode in which this subject is treated in the paper before us. This quality, it is true, is common to all works and treatises upon military operations. I well remember the peculiar feeling excited in my mind by reading such works; that while my blood was curdling with horror at the anticipated results of certain deadly combinations, the writer coolly dismissed the subject by speaking of the enemy—always in such cases 'represented by unity,' as the sum-books say—in some such way as this: 'He will in this case be either driven back with great loss, or destroyed.' Still, in ordinary cases, the immolation was not entire, the enemy was not absolutely exterminated; and to find now, therefore, the destruction of whole fleets or armies at one swoop reduced to a cool scientific formula, impresses my mind in a proportionate degree. I feel at a loss to believe that I am reading what was written by a *man;* and I beg it may be understood that if I have treated the subject at all in a spirit of badinage, it is only because I am incredulous as to the efficacy of the means at the disposal of the patentee for effecting wholesale annihilation, and teaching the world at large to do the same.

'In order to carry out this invention,' says the writer in the magazine, 'he takes coal-tar, naphtha, alone or in combination with other materials, and causes the same to be conveyed to a hostile stronghold, naval battery, or fort, by the following means. In attacking the sea-faces of such strongholds or fortifications as Cronstadt, Malta, or Sebastopol, where there is scarcely any tide, but a sufficient depth of water, he freights with the before-mentioned materials submarine steam-vessels, or vessels rendered shot-proof, having iron compartments or tanks specially adapted for containing the same, and despatches them to the enemy's works; in front of which, by means of pumps, hose, and suitable outlets, a sufficient quantity of the composition is discharged upon the surface of the water surrounding or bordering the fort or battery. He then places a ball of potassium in the entrance of the tube or hose, by means of suitable cocks or taps, and renews the pumping, so as to force the ball of potassium through the tube into the water, when, by its great affinity for oxygen, it will immediately take fire on rising to the surface, and inflame the entire quantity of composition previously transmitted. The consequence is the formation of a dense, black, suffocating fog or vapour, which envelops the fort or battery, rushing into the casemates or embrasures, and driving away the gunners and all engaged therein. He keeps up the supply of the composition for a sufficient period, so that the attacking vessels can approach sufficiently near to destroy the enemy's works, already rendered untenable and incapable of resistance. Fortresses such as the above named are to be rendered harmless by this process, and destroyed without loss of life to the attacking vessels.'

I give the above as a specimen only. The same materials, we are told, may be combined in many ways, and applied to projectiles of various kinds. The principle is the same in all cases. The 'suffocating fog' is to smother all who are not within reach of the actual fire; and submarine boats are to shoot to the surface on which floats a hostile fleet those deadly materials which are to insure its destruction without risk to those below. It is no longer a pity—as it was—that villainous saltpetre should be digged out of the bowels of the harmless earth, and many a good tall fellow destroyed by its agency: it is villainous potassium, and still more execrable naphtha, which some future popinjay shall denounce as the exterminators of tall and short fellows alike!

So curious do I think the article to which I am now referring, and which is merely an amplification of the specification itself, that I could willingly linger over it until I had exceeded reasonable limits. There is, however, one paragraph which strikes me as indicating a degree of nicety and perfection in the use of the formidable powers now placed at our disposal, which deserves a little further attention.

We are informed that 'where the destruction of an enemy's vessels is not desired, the hostile fleet is permitted to enter a channel, or to take up any position chosen for its attack; the inflammable material is then discharged, and ignited at moderate distances from the various vessels composing the fleet, precautions being taken to regulate the supply in such a way, that, while the flames are not suffered to approach and injure the vessels, the black fog enshrouds the fleet in impenetrable darkness, and destroys their crews simultaneously with the stifling vapour. The operation being completed, the atmosphere is allowed to regain its natural purity, and possession of the fleet may then be obtained.' This precision and accuracy reminds one of what is said of Nasmyth's steam-hammer, which, while it can forge an anchor of many tons' weight, may be used to crack a hazel-nut.

It would further appear that the shot-proof batteries of iron, worked on water by steam, are to be completely powerless in the hands of this patentee. He can, from below, envelop them in noxious gases, which are sure to be drawn down into the engine-room by the draught of the furnace, destroying the engineers, and rendering attempt at escape hopeless.

One more quotation: 'Land-batteries furnished with well-served, long-ranged guns, firing the M'Intosh shells, filled with combustible material, would effectually protect a town or harbour from the attack of an enemy's fleet; or even a few shot-proof vessels having well-served guns, firing such shells, would not only keep a hostile fleet in check, but scatter on the vessels a vast shower of burning material, causing a general conflagration.'

Troops attempting to pass through a defile or mountain-pass have no chance at all. Masses of cotton, or other fibrous material, steeped in naphtha, are to be placed in their way, ignited, and 'the supply kept up by hose from some convenient high place;' and so the men must all perish miserably from want of air—'suffocated in absolute darkness!'

Such is the new character which war is destined to assume 'under the patent.' The thing which strikes us most forcibly, is the disadvantage at which *we* shall compete with other nations. We are required, it would seem, to secure to an individual, by patent, the advantages arising from the use of materials which other nations, now that the thing is made public, can use against us; just as if when gunpowder was first invented, and its composition made known to all the world, the country of the inventor could turn it against aggressors only by paying a royalty for permission to do so. I cannot but think that, in the event of a war, this would place us in rather an awkward predicament.

This subject is, on the whole, very 'suggestive,' to use a favourite phrase; and no doubt it will be felt so before very long. The brilliant army of 'coachmen and guards' of my boyish days, has so completely gone down before the onslaught of the dusky corps of stokers and pokers, that I feel I ought not to wonder if the cavalry and infantry who still hold their ground on land, and the blue jackets who man our noble ships at sea, were to disappear in a short time, leaving their places to a tarry brigade of submarine boatmen, a dozen regiments of 'wagon-train,' destined for the transport of naphtha, and a corps of engineer chemists, to be employed in the concoction and administration of potassium pills.

I have treated this matter, according to my present view of it, as one which exhibits the lengths to which theory will sometimes carry its votaries, rather than as worthy of serious faith in the professions of the patentee.

If, upon further examination, however, his project can be realised, and patent warfare becomes a great fact in modern history, it may be the means of effecting an indirect good, through the power of insuring the total extinction of all who engage in war on either side. When the ingenuity of man shall have at length devised the means of effecting this, all war must cease as a matter of course; and nations must find some other mode of settling their quarrels and adjusting their differences. Would it not, then, be a good plan, if, by mutual consent, a general patent for peace was to be granted to this ingenious inventor, instead of a patent for war, and that all civilised nations were to bind themselves not to infringe his rights by making use of his discoveries without his consent? Thus he would become a grand arbiter and peace-preserver; and his power of allowing any one of the contracting parties, if aggrieved, to 'pitch' into the wrong-doer with this dangerous compound of bituminous substances, and smoke him in his fortresses like an old fox in his den, would be sure to act as a salutary check upon the rest, and keep them on their good-behaviour. This looks plausible, and may be useful; but the question may be asked: Would it pay?—What would the patentee say to it? It is clear that he proposes advantages, no doubt pecuniary ones, to himself, by the sale of royalties; and we do not yet know the price at which he is willing to allow us to destroy our enemies: as for our enemies, they will destroy us by the use of his invention without asking his permission.

In short, if this invention really answers to the specification, the inventor must have counted largely on the stupidity of the country in asking for a patent, and the country must have acknowledged his judgment to be quite correct by granting it.

LOUIS XVI. ON THE SCAFFOLD.

Historians of all political shades have till recently told us that Louis XVI. submitted himself with pious resignation to the fate which awaited him; and that, attended to the scaffold by the courageous Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont,* a relative of the late Maria Edgeworth, he tranquilly surrendered his soul into the hands of its Maker, which, as it winged its flight on high, was accompanied by these famous words of the confessor: '*Montez au ciel, fils de Saint Louis!*'—(Son of Saint Louis, ascend to heaven!) But Louis Blanc's *History of the Revolution* gives a version as new and as startling as it is opposite and extraordinary.

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* Firmont is the name of a small estate in the county of Longford, about five miles distant from the seat of the Edgeworth family at Edgeworthstown, celebrated some thirty years ago for a philanthropic college, founded there in 1818 by the late Mr Lovell Edgeworth, and which was much admired and praised by Sir Walter Scott, while on a visit to Miss Edgeworth during the summer of 1825.

'At ten minutes past ten,' he says, 'the procession reached the foot of the scaffold. It had been erected in front of the palace of the Tuileries, in the square called after Louis XV., and near the spot where stood the statue of the most corrupt of kings—a king who died tranquilly in his bed. The condemned was three minutes descending from the carriage. Upon quitting the Temple, he had refused the over-coat which Clery, his valet-de-chambre, had offered him, and now appeared in a brown coat, white waistcoat, gray breeches, and white stockings. His hair was not disordered, nor was any change perceptible in his countenance. The Abbé de Firmont was dressed in black. A large open space had been kept round the scaffold, with cannon on every side; while beyond, as far as the eye could reach, stood an unarmed multitude. When the executioner came to open the door of the carriage, Louis, in a tone of authority, ordered him to take care of his confessor. Having alighted, Louis fixed his eyes upon the soldiers who surrounded him, and, with a menacing voice, cried: "Silence!" The drums ceased to beat, but, at a signal from their officer, the drummers went on again. "What treason is this?" he shouted. "I am lost! I am lost!" For it is evident that up to this moment he had been clinging to hope. The executioners now approaching him to arrange his dress, he repulsed them haughtily, and himself removed the collar from his neck. But all the blood in his frame turned into fire when they sought to tie his hands. "Tie my hands!" he shrieked. A struggle was inevitable; it came. "It is indisputable," says Mercier, "that Louis fought with his executioners." The Abbé Edgeworth stood by, perplexed, horrified, speechless. At last, as his master seemed to look inquiringly at him, he said: "Sire, in this additional outrage, I see only a last trait of the resemblance between your majesty and the God who will give you your reward." At these words, the indignation of the man gave way to the humility of the Christian, and Louis said to the executioners: "I will drain the cup to the dregs." They tied his hands, they cut off his hair, and thus leaning on the arm of his confessor, he began, with a slow tread and sunken demeanour, to mount the steps of the guillotine. Upon the last step, however, he suddenly roused himself, and walked rapidly across to the other side of the scaffold, when, by a sign commanding silence to the drummers, he exclaimed: "I die innocent of the crimes imputed to me." His face was very red, and, according to the narrative of his confessor, "his voice was so loud that it could be heard as far as the Pont Tournant." Some other expressions were distinctly heard: "I pardon the authors of my death; and I pray God that the blood you are about to shed may never be visited upon France!" He was about to continue, when his voice was drowned by the renewed rolling of the drums, at a signal which, it is affirmed, was given by the comedian Dugazon, in anticipation of the orders of Santerre. "Silence! Be silent!" cried Louis XVI., losing all self-control, and stamping violently with his foot. Richard, one of the executioners, seized a pistol, and took aim at the king. It was necessary to drag him along by force. With difficulty fastened to the fatal plank, he continued to utter terrible cries, only interrupted by the fall of the knife, which struck off his head. This was immediately shewn by the executioners to the people, who shouted in reply: "Long live the Republic!"'

Such is the version of M. Louis Blanc, a French political refugee at present in this country, and we confess we have never before found anything of the kind in the various accounts we have perused of that great political tragedy of the first French Revolution. As a contrast to this statement, we shall here produce the narrative we have found in a work published in Paris about two years ago, entitled *Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XVI.**

'*The Execution.*—People have been accustomed to read the account given of Louis XVI.'s death by royalist historians; we prefer publishing the article of a republican journal of the time. As the editor of that journal had voted for the death of the king, he felt no sympathy for the victim; and should we possess no other version than the one we quote, the king's last dying moments cannot appear otherwise than truly Christian-like, truly admirable.'

The article commences with an account of the prison-hours of Capet, as the republicans called the king, on the day when his sentence of death was notified to him; but as this does not differ materially from that of the common authorities, we pass on to the nearer preparations for the dreadful morrow.

'The minister of justice had brought the confessor with him in his carriage, and when the former withdrew, the king asked for his own family. Thereon a municipal officer repaired to the females' department, and said to Antoinette: "Madame, a decree authorises you to come and see your husband, who is desirous to see you and your children!" At nine that evening the whole family visited him, when there were screams, and tears, and sobs for some time. After that, they were all a little calmer, and separated at half-past ten; but as they were leaving him, the king asked of his guards if he might see his family once more on the morrow-morning, to which he was answered affirmatively, and then he supped by himself. During the family interview, the confessor had been concealed in one of the towers of the Temple prison, but when the family left, he joined Louis Capet. Some time after, this confessor presented himself before the sitting council, and informed them, that as Louis wished mass to be said, it would be expedient to have the necessary things got ready; whereupon the council gave their orders, and the vicar of Saint-François d'Assise supplied all the requisites. Louis supped as usual, spent a part of the night with his confessor, and both retired to rest, in different chambers, at two o'clock, Clery receiving Louis's orders to be with him by five. He slept well; and Clery entered his room at the hour appointed, dressed him, and arranged his hair, which, while being done, Louis took from off his watch-chain a wedding-ring, upon which his own and his wife's initials, as well as the date of their marriage, were engraven. At half-past six he heard mass, partook of the sacrament, and spent the rest of the time, up till eight o'clock, with his confessor. He then asked for a pair of scissors, which the council, after deliberation, refused him. When the moment of departing for the place of execution arrived, he asked to be left alone for a few minutes. He then handed the small ring mentioned to Clery, saying to him: "Give this to my wife, and tell her that I separate from her with sorrow and anguish." He also gave him for his son a silver watch-seal, upon which the crown of France was engraved, and a small packet of the hair of all his family for the queen, adding: "Say to her that I ask pardon for not having sent for her as I promised; but it was only to spare her the pangs of a cruel separation." He also wished to hand a paper to one of the municipal guards, who refused taking charge of it; but another of them took it. It was his will and testament. He requested that Clery should be allowed to remain with his family; and then he took his departure with calmness, without being bound, and accompanied by the citizen-lieutenant Labrasse, a sergeant-major of gendarmerie, and his confessor. He was observed asking several times for his hat, which was given him.

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* Librairie de L. Hachette et Cie., Rue Pierre-Sarrazin, Paris.

When near the staircase, he wanted to speak privately to a person present, but was prevented from so doing by the lieutenant. "Oh, fear nothing," said he. He then descended the flight of steps, and crossed the court-yard on foot, through a double row of gendarmes. When he reached the carriage, which was the mayor's own private one, he went in first, followed by his confessor, and the lieutenant and sergeant-major; the former next to him, and the two latter placing themselves opposite to him. While on the way, he read the prayers for the dying and the Psalms of David. The greatest silence reigned around. On arriving at the Place de la Révolution (the square since called after Louis XV.), he several times recommended his confessor to the special care of the lieutenant, and then alighted. He was instantly given up to the executioner. He took off his coat and cravat with his own hands, and only kept on his plain swanskin vest. At first he would not allow his hair to be cut off or his hands to be tied; but after a few words from his confessor he submitted. He then mounted the scaffold, advanced towards the left side, his face being very red, and looking for some minutes on the objects around, inquired if the drums would not cease beating. He wished to go forward to speak to the vast concourse collected, but several voices cried out to the executioners, who were four in number, to do their duty. Nevertheless, while being strapped to the fatal plank, he distinctly pronounced these words: "I die innocent; and it is my wish that my blood may be of use to the French people, and that it may appease the wrath of Almighty God." At ten minutes past ten o'clock, his head was severed from his body, and then held up to the people, when from all sides the cry of "Long live the Republic!" was instantly heard. Louis's remains were placed in an osier pannier, taken off in a cart to the churchyard of the Madeleine, and interred in a grave between two layers of quicklime. A guard was placed over it for a couple of days.'—*Les Révolutions de Paris.*

Let the reader 'look on this picture and on that,' and determine which of the two is the more consistent with the general character and bearing of Louis.

Perhaps we may close this brief notice by following the melancholy contents of that osier pannier to its grave of quicklime, and shewing the anxiety felt even by the regicides to treat the remains of the king with decency and decorum.

'On the 20th of January 1793,' says Renardon, 'the executive power communicated to M. Picavez, the vicar of the parish of La Madeleine, their instructions relative to the obsequies of his majesty Louis XVI.; but the worthy vicar, not feeling himself equal to the fulfilling of a task so onerous and so painful, feigned illness, and advised me, as his principal curate, to fill his place, and to take upon myself the responsibility of carrying out the orders of the executive power. My first answer was a positive refusal, because none perhaps ever loved the king more than myself; but I at last consented, as M. Picavez made me comprehend the disagreeable consequences which might accrue to us both, if I persisted in my refusal. On the morning of the following day, therefore, the 21st of January, after having made sure that everything ordered by the executive power—such as the quantity of quicklime, and the depth of the grave, which, as well as I can remember, was to be either ten or twelve feet—had been punctually attended to, I went, accompanied by the late Abbé Damoreau, and took up my position at the gate of the church, and there awaited, in solemn silence, the arrival of the royal corpse. When I claimed the body of his majesty, the members of the department and of the commune replied to me that they had received orders not to lose sight of it for a moment; so we were obliged to accompany them to the cemetery situated in the Rue d'Anjou St Honoré. When we reached and entered it, I obtained profound silence, and then the royal corpse was delivered up to us. It was clad in a white vest (*piqué blanc*), gray silk breeches, and stockings of the same. We chanted the vesper-service, and recited all the prayers in use for the service of the dead; and truth commands me to say that the vast populace around, whose cries and vociferations but so lately rent the air and chilled the heart, listened in the most religious silence to the prayers and orisons offered up for the repose of his majesty's soul. We then withdrew in silence, after so painful a ceremony, and a *procès verbal* (authenticated report) was drawn up on the spot by the juge de paix. On my return to the church, I drew up myself, and inscribed a funeral act, in due form, in a plain register-book, which was seized and carried off by the revolutionary committee, on the compulsory closing of that church.'

In the midst of a nicely laid out garden, formerly the cemetery of La Madeleine, at the extreme end of the Rue d'Anjou, and open to the public, stands the Chapelle Expiatoire, erected after the Restoration in memory of Louis XVI.; and even to this day, after the turmoils of revolution and subversion, that expiatory edifice is always crowded on every 21st of January.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LII.—THE ROUTE.

It was a struggle between Aurora and the moon which of them should rule the sky, when our bugle rang its clear *réveille*, rousing the rangers from their slumber, and startling their steeds at the stall. The goddess of morning soon triumphed, and under her soft blue light, men and horses could be seen moving about, until the bugle again sounded; this time to 'boot and saddle;' and the rangers began to form in the plazza, and prepare for the route.

A single wagon with its white tilt and long team of mules, already 'hitched up,' stood near the centre of the square. It constituted the whole baggage-train of the corps, and served as an ambulance for our invalids. Both baggage and sick had been safely stowed, and the vehicle was ready for the road. The bugler, already in his saddle, awaited my orders to sound the 'forward.'

I had climbed to my favourite 'smoking-room,' the azotea. Perhaps it was the last time I should ever set foot on those painted tiles. My eyes wandered over the plazza, though I little heeded what was passing there. Only the salient points of the picture were noted by me—steeds under saddle and bridle; men buckling on folded blankets, holsters, and valises; a few already in the saddle; a few more standing by the heads of their horses; and still another few grouped around the door of the *pulperia*, having a last drink of *mezcal* or *catalan* with their swarthy Mexican acquaintances. Here and there, in front of some adobé hut, might be observed a more tender leave-taking. The ranger fully equipped—with arms, haversack, and canteen—leaning against the heavy bars of a window, with face turned inward, as though he was talking to some prisoner through the grating of a jail. But he is himself the real captive, ensnared during his short sojourn, and still held in chains by the olive-skinned *poblana*, whose dark liquid eyes may be seen on the other side of the reja, flashing with love, or melting with sad tenderness at the prospect of parting.

Others, again, are bidding their *adios* in retired corners, under the shadow of the church walls, or in groups of four or five more openly in the plazza itself. Early as is the hour, the people have all arisen; and not a few of the brown, rebosa-clad, short-skirted wenches are already on their way, *jarro* on head, to the fountain. There the pitchers are filled, and lifted on their heads—perhaps for the last time—by the rangers, who perform the office with all the rude grace in their power. Then follows a profusion of smiles and bows, and a dialogue, on the ranger's part extending to the whole of his Spanish, which consists of the phrase:

'Mucho bueno, muchacha!'

The usual reply, accompanied with a display of pretty white teeth, is:

'Mucho bueno, cavallero! mucho bueno Tejano!' given in like ungrammatical phrase, in order that it may be intelligible to the person to whom it is addressed.

I have often been surprised at the success of my great uncouth followers with these *petite* dark-eyed damsels of Anahuac; but, indeed, many of the rangers are not bad-looking men. On the contrary, there are handsome fellows among them, if they were only put into clean shirts, and a little more closely shaven. But woman's eye is keen-sighted in such matters: she easily penetrates through the disguise of dust, the bronze of sun-tan, and the shaggy mask of an ill-kept beard; and no eye is quicker in this respect than that of the fair Mexicana. In the big, apparently rude, individual, called a 'ranger,' she beholds a type of strength and courage, a heart that can cherish, and an arm that can protect her. These are qualities that, from all time, have won the love of woman.

It is evident they are not all friends whom we are leaving behind us. Hostile faces may be observed, many of them, peering from open doors or windows. Here and there a sulky lepero swings about in his blanket, or cowers by the corner of the street, scowling savagely from under his broad-brimmed hat. Most of this class are absent—as long since ascertained—with the guerrilla; but a few still remain to give shadow to the picture. They regard the approaches towards the women with ill-concealed anger; and would resent this politeness if they dared. They confine the exhibition of their spite to the dastardly meanness of ill-treating the women themselves, whenever they have an opportunity. No later than the night before, one of them was detected in beating his sweetheart or mistress for the crime, as was alleged, of dallying too long in the company of a Tejano. The Tejano, in this case, took the law into his own hands, and severely chastised the jealous *pelado*.

Even in the hurried glance which I gave to these scenes of leave-taking, I could not help noticing an expression on the faces of some of the young girls that had in it a strange significance. It was something more than sadness: it was more like the uneasy look that betokens apprehension.

Perhaps the state of mind I was in magnified my perceptions. At that moment, a struggle was passing in my own breast, and a feeling of irresolution lay heavy upon me. All night long had my mind dwelt upon the same thought—the danger that menaced my betrothed—all night long I had been occupied with plans to avert it, but no reasonable scheme had I succeeded in devising.

It is true the danger was only hypothetical and undefined, but it was just this supposititious indefiniteness that caused the difficulty in providing against it. Had it assumed a tangible shape, I might more easily have adopted some means of avoiding it: but no—it remained a shadow, and against a shadow I knew not what precautions to take. When morning broke, I was still struggling under the same nervous indecision.

Problematical as was the peril my fancy had formed, there were moments when it appalled me—moments when my mind laboured under a painful presentiment, and I could not cast the load by any act of volition. With all my philosophy, I could not fortify myself against the belief that 'coming events cast their shadows before;' and, spite of myself, I kept repeating in thought the weird prophetic words. Upon my soul, certainly, there were shadows, and dark ones; if the events should have any correspondence with them, then there was misery before me.

I have termed the danger in which Isolina was placed indefinite: it was not so indefinite, after a slight analysis; it was directly traceable to the presence of Rafael Ijurra. True, there were other sources of apprehension; other perils surrounded her, arising from the disturbed state of the country—but these did not point at her in particular. That frontier province had been for years in a distracted condition—by revolution or Indian invasion—and war was no new thing to its people. In the midst of strife had the fair flower grown to perfect blooming, without having been either crushed or trodden upon. Isolina de Vargas was a woman of sufficient spirit to resist insult and cast off intrusion. I had just had proof of this. Under ordinary circumstances, I had no fear that she would be unequal to the emergency; but the circumstances in which she now stood were not of that character; they were extraordinary and to an extreme degree. In addition to the light thrown upon Ijurra's designs by his own menacing confession, I knew other particulars of him. Holingsworth had helped me to a knowledge of this bad man, and that knowledge it was that rendered me apprehensive. From a nature so base and brutal, it was natural I should dread the worst.

But what could I do? I might have thrown up my commission, and remained upon the spot, but that would have been worse than idle. I could not have protected myself, much less another. The rangers once gone from the place, my life would not have been safe there for a single hour.

Only one plan suggested itself that had the semblance of feasibility—to seek another interview with Isolina—her father as well—and adjure them to remove at once from the scene of danger. They might go to San Antonio de Bexar, where, far removed from hostile ground, they could live in safety till the war should be ended.

It was only at the last moment that this happy idea came into my head, and I reviled myself that I had not conceived it sooner. The chief difficulty would lie in the opposition of Don Ramon. I knew that he was aware of the *friendship* that existed between his daughter and myself, and furthermore, that he had opposed no obstacle to it; but how could I convince him of the necessity for so sudden an expatriation as the one I was about to propose? how should I persuade him of the peril I myself dreaded? and from such a source!

Another difficulty I might encounter—in the proud spirit of Isolina herself. Much did I fear she would never consent to be thus driven from her home, and by such a poltroon as she knew her cousin to be. She had cowed and conquered him but the day before; she feared him not; she would not be likely to partake of my painful apprehensions. My counsel might be disregarded, my motives misconstrued.

The time, too, was unfavourable. We must be on the march by sunrise—so ran our orders—and already the day was breaking. I cared not much for this: I could easily have overtaken my troop; but it was a delicate matter—that could only be excused by a certain knowledge of danger—to awake a gentleman's family at such an hour, even for the purpose of warning them. Moreover, should my advice prove fruitless, I reflected that my visit—which could not be made in secret—might aid in bringing about the very danger I apprehended. A circumstance so extraordinary could not fail to be noticed by all.

It was thus that I was held in irresolution, while my troop was forming for the march.

At the last moment, thanks to the thoughtful Holingsworth, a compromise offered. He suggested that I should send my advice in writing. In that I could be as explicit as I pleased, and bring before my protegées all the arguments I might be able to adduce—perhaps more successfully than if urged by a personal appeal.

My comrade's suggestion was adopted; and in haste, but with a fervour resulting from my fears, I penned the admonitory epistle. A trusty messenger was found in one of the *Ayankieados*, who promised, as soon as the family should be stirring, to carry the letter to its destination.

With my heart somewhat relieved of its load, though still far from light, I gave the order to march. The bugle rang clear and loud, and its cheerful notes, as I sprang into the saddle, combined with the inspiration borrowed from my buoyant steed, produced a soothing effect upon my spirit.

CHAPTER LIII.

CAMP GOSSIP.

It was but a short-lived light—a passing gleam—and soon again fell the shadow, dark as ever. Strive as I might, I could not cast the load that weighed upon my bosom; reason as I would, I could not account for its heaviness.

It was natural that a parting like ours should produce pain, and misgivings as to the future. My life was to be staked in the lottery of war; I might fall on the field of fight; I might perish by camp-pestilence—a foe that in the campaign kills more soldiers than sword or shot—the many perils of flood and field were before me, and it was natural I should regard the future with a degree of doubtfulness. But it was not the contemplation of all these dangers that filled me with such a terrible foreboding. Strange to say, I had a forecast that I should survive them. It was almost a conviction, yet it failed to comfort me. It comprehended not the safety of Isolina. No—but the contrary. Along with it came the presentiment, that we should never meet again.

Once or twice, as this dread feeling became most acute, I reined up my horse, half resolved to gallop back; but again the wild idea passed from me, and I continued irresolutely on.

Something of prudence, too, now restrained me from returning: it would no longer have been safe to go back to the rancheria. As we issued from the plazza, we could hear distant jeering, and cries of '*Mueran los Tejanos!*' It was with difficulty I could restrain the rangers from turning to take vengeance. One, the worse for mezcal, had loitered behind, under the influence of the drink, fancying himself secure. Him the *pelados* had 'bonnetted,' and otherwise maltreated. They would have murdered him outright, but that some of them, more prudent than their fellows, had counselled the mob to let him go—alleging that the Tejanos were yet 'too near, and might come back.'

Again I had strife with my men: they would have returned and fired the place, had I permitted them. Fortunately, he who had been ill treated was a good-for-nothing fellow—scarcely worth the sympathy of his comrades—and I was well satisfied at his having received a lesson. It might be useful, and was much needed, for 'straggling' was one of the ranger-crimes most difficult to cure.

Along the road, we saw signs of a guerrilla. Shots were fired at us from a hill; but a party sent to the place encountered no one. Horse-tracks were observed, and once a brace of mounted men were seen galloping away over a distant slope. It might be the band of Ijurra, and doubtless it was so; but we fancied at the time that Canales himself was near; and as an encounter with his large and well-organised force would be a very different affair from a skirmish with the other, we felt the necessity of advancing with caution.

The prospect of a 'fight' with that noted partisan created quite an excitement in the ranks. To have captured Canales—the 'Chapparal Fox,' as the Texans termed him—or to have made conquest of his band, would have been esteemed a feat of grand consequence—only inferior in importance to a pitched battle, or the taking of 'Game-leg' (Santa Anna) himself.

I confess that to me the idea of measuring strength with the famed guerrillero was at that moment rife with charms; and the excitement derived from the hope of meeting him, for a while abstracted my mind from its painful bodings.

But we reached the town without seeing aught of the Chapparal Fox. It was not likely that he was on that road; or if so, he took care not to shew himself. Canales fought not for glory alone, and the rangers were not the foes he cared to encounter. Rich baggage-trains were the game he was used to hunt, and our solitary 'company-wagon,' filled with frying-pans, camp-kettles, sick soldiers, and tattered blankets—half alive with those charming little insects of the genera *pulex* and *pediculus*—had no attractions for the gallant guerrillero.

On reaching the town, we were surprised to find that the division had not yet moved. It was to have marched on that morning, but a countermand had arrived from head-quarters, delaying the movement for some days—perhaps a week.

This was rare news to me; and as soon as I heard it, my mind became occupied with projects and anticipations of a pleasant nature. I had hoped that we would be sent back to the rancheria, but alas! no—our orders were to remain with the division.

As every available building was occupied by troops, the rangers, as usual, were treated as 'outsiders,' and compelled to take to the grass. Half a mile from the town, a spot was shewn us for our camp. It was on the banks of a pretty rivulet; and there, having picketed our steeds, stretched our canvas to the sun, and washed the dust from our faces, we made ourselves at home.

I did not remain long by the camp. As soon as our tents were fairly pitched, I left them, and walked back into the town—partly to get more definite information as to the future movements of the army, and partly with the design of indulging a little in the social feeling. I had some old comrades among the different regiments of the division; and after such a long spell of rustication, I was not indisposed to refresh my spirit by the renewal of former fellowships.

At head-quarters, I learned definitely that we should not march for a week at the least. So far good; and after hearing this, I proceeded to the *fonda*, the rendezvous of all the jovial spirits of the army. Here I encountered the friends of whom I was in search; and for a short while I found respite from the thoughts that had been harrowing me.

I soon gathered the current 'camp gossip,' and learned who were the 'newspaper heroes' of the hour; over many of whose names my friends and I could not restrain either our satire or laughter. It appeared that the men of deeds were scarcely known beyond the limits of the army itself, while others, who in the field of battle had actually played the poltroon, had at home become household words in the mouths of the people. One general, whom I myself saw hiding in a ditch during the rage of battle, was the theme of speech, sentiment, and song. The newspapers were filled with praises, and the windows with pictures of a 'gallant dragoon officer,' who had somehow obtained the credit of capturing a battery. My rangers cried 'Bah!' when I told them this. They themselves were the men who had first galloped over those Mexican guns!

'Keeping an editor in pay' was a standing sarcasm applicable to more than one of our generals; and the 'army correspondent' taking advantage of this pruriency for fame, lived well, and swaggered in proportional importance.

Ah, glory! what sacrifices men make for thee upon the shrine of conscience! For my part, I do not think I could feel happy under the credit of a feat I had not performed. Surely the consciousness of having done a deed is of itself a sufficient reward? He is but an unhappy hero who is not a hero to himself!

Pleasanter gossip I heard about the relations existing between our troops and the people of the town. Many of the inhabitants had grown quite *Ayankieado*, in consequence of our excellent behaviour towards them. Our conduct was compared with that which they had lately experienced at the hands of their own army. The latter is in the habit of seizing property at pleasure, on pretence of using it for the defence of the state. We, on the contrary, pay for everything—round prices too—in bright American dollars. The ricos and merchants prefer this system, and would have no objections to making it permanent. Outrages are few on the part of our soldiery, and severely punished by the general. Our enemies contrast the modest bearing of the American soldier with the conceited strut and insolent swagger of their own gold-bedizened *militarios*, who are wont on all occasions to 'take the wall' of them. It is only outside the lines, between stragglers and leperos, that the retaliation system is carried on so fiercely. Within the walls, everything is order, with a mildness too rare under martial law. Private property is strictly regarded, and private dwellings are not occupied by our troops. Even the officers are not billeted in private houses; and many of them have to make shift in rather uncomfortable quarters, while most of the soldiers live under canvas. This state of things is scarcely satisfactory to the troops; and some grumbling is heard. There is no complaint, however, from the Mexicans, who seem rather astonished at so much forbearance on the part of their conquerors.

I doubt whether, in the whole history of war, can be found a conquest characterised by equal mildness and humanity, as is the 'Second Conquest of Mexico.'

It is principally for this reason the people have grown so well affected towards us. But there is another, perhaps, not less potent. From the extensive operations we are now about to undertake, they see that we mean war in earnest; and the belief has become general, that a large 'annexation' will follow; that perhaps the whole valley of the Rio Grande will become American territory. It is but human nature in them to do homage to the rising sun.

The ricos are better disposed towards us than the common people; but this enigma is easily explained. The latter are more *patriotic*—that is, more ready to fight for native tyranny, than accept freedom from a foreign hand. 'Tis so in all lands. In the event of a war with England, the black slave of Carolina would range himself by the side of his master, and prove the bitterest foe to the enemies, not of his *freedom*, but of his *country*.

The *familias principales* of Mexico have good reasons for being friendly to us. They have a stake to lose, which, under their own government, has been ill guarded for them. No wonder they should desire to come under the broad protecting wings of the northern eagle.

* * *

I found that another species of 'annexation' had been going on during my absence. One of our officers had become annexed to a wealthy señorita of the place, and the marriage-ceremony had been performed with great pomp and splendour. Another was talked of as being *fiancé*; and it was expected that the example would find numerous imitators.

I need not say that I was much interested by these *novedades*, and I returned with lighter heart to the camp.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE RUINED RANCHO.

The pleasant excitement caused by my visit to my old comrades was soon over; and having nothing to do but lounge about my tent, I became again the victim of the same painful bodings. I could not shake them off.

Subtile and mysterious is the spirit-world within us; certainly does it seem to have prescience of the future. Is it an electric chain connecting what is, with what is to be? Or is it the second-sight of instinct? Certainly there are times when something within whispers a warning, as, in the physical world, God's wild creatures are warned from without of the earthquake and the storm. How often do we experience the realisation of portentous dreams? Why should not the waking soul have also its moments of clairvoyance?

As I lay stretched upon my leathern *catré*, I gave way to such reflections. I soon succeeded in reasoning myself into a full belief in foreknowledge; and my apprehensions were proportionately strengthened. But I had conceived a design, and the prospect of putting it in execution somewhat relieved me from the heaviness I had hitherto felt.

My new project was to take a score of my best men, to ride back the road we had come, place the party in ambush near the hacienda, while I alone should enter the house, and further urge the counsels I had committed to writing. If I should find that these had been already followed, so much the better—I should be assured, and return content; but I felt almost certain that Don Ramon had rejected them. At all events, I was determined to know the truth—determined, moreover, to gratify my longing for one more interview with my beloved.

I had warned the men and fixed the hour—as soon as it was dark enough to conceal our departure from the camp.

I had two reasons for not starting earlier—first, because I did not wish this *private scouting* to be known at head-quarters. It is true that in such matters we rangers had the advantage of regular troops. Though belonging to the division, our duty was usually detached from it, and we were rarely 'missed' when absent. There was thus a sort of pleasant independence in my command, which I for one fully appreciated. For all that, I did not desire the whole world to know of an expedition like the one projected.

My second motive for going in the night was simple prudence. I dared not take the whole of my command along with me without permission from above. The absence of the corps without leave would certainly be noticed, even were it but for a few hours; and with the smaller party I intended to take, caution would be requisite. Should we move along the road before it was deserted, some swift messenger might carry the tidings *en avant*, and get us into trouble.

I designed to start at the earliest hour of darkness, so that I might not alarm the hacienda by a midnight visit. An hour and a half of constant riding would bring me to its gate.

* * *

At the last moment of twilight we were in our saddles; and rode silently into the chapparal that skirted our camp. After filing for some distance through a narrow path, we debouched upon the up-river road—the same that conducted to the rancheria.

The trappers, Rube and Garey, acting as scouts, went forward in the advance. They were on foot—their horses remaining behind with the party.

It was a mode of march I had adopted after some experience in bush-fighting. The scouts of a marching force should always go on foot, whether the main body be dragoons or infantry. In this manner they can take advantage of the ground; and by keeping under cover of the timber, are enabled to reconnoitre the angles of the road in a much safer way than when on horseback. The great danger to a scout—and consequently to the party for which he is acting—lies in his being *first* seen, and the risk is greater when he is mounted. The horse cannot be drawn under cover without an effort; and the sound of the hoof may be heard; whereas in nine cases out of ten, a man on foot—that is such a man as either Rube Rawlings or Bill Garey—will discover the enemy before he is himself seen, or any ambuscade can be attempted. Of course the scout should never advance beyond the possibility of retreating upon the party he is guiding.

With full confidence in the men who had been sent forward, we rode on, timing our pace, so as not to overtake them. Now and then we caught a glimpse of them, at the further end of a long stretch, skirting the bushes, or stooping behind the cover, to reconnoitre the road in advance. To our chagrin, it was clear moonlight, and we could distinguish their forms at a great distance. We should much have preferred a darker night.

The road we were travelling upon was entirely without habitations; most of it ran through light chapparal forest, with neither clearing nor homestead. One solitary *rancho* stood at about equal distances between the town and the rancheria; and was known among the rangers by the familiar sobriquet of the 'half-way house.' It was a poor hovel of yucca, with a small patch around that had once grown yams, chile-pepper, and a stock of maize for whoever had inhabited it; but its occupants had long since disappeared—the prowling soldier-robber from the camp had paid it many a visit, and its household gods lay broken upon the hearth. The *tortilla* stone and *comal*, red earthen ollas, calabash cups, bedsteads and benches of the *caña vaquera*, a whirligig spindle, an old stringless *jarana* or bandolon, with other like effects, lay in fragments upon the floor. Mingling with these were cheap coloured wood-prints, of saints and Saviour, that had been dragged from the walls, and with the torn leaves of an old Spanish *misa*, trampled in dust and dishonour.

I paint this tableau of ruin, not that it was in any way connected with the events of our narrative, but that it had strangely affected me. On the day before, as we rode past, I had halted a moment by the little rancho, and contemplated the scene with a feeling of melancholy that amounted almost to sadness. Little thought I that a still sadder spectacle awaited me in that same spot.

We had approached within less than half a mile of the rancho, when a strange medley of sounds reached our ears. Human voices they were, and borne upon the light breeze we could distinguish them to be the voices of women. Occasionally harsher tones were heard mingling in the murmur, but most of them had the soft rich intonation that distinguishes the female voice.

We all drew bridle, and listened. The sounds continued in the same confused chorus, but there was neither song nor joy in the accents. On the contrary, the night-wind carried upon its wings the voices of 'lamentation and wailing.'

'There are women in trouble,' remarked one of my followers in a loud suggestive tone.

The remark caused all of us simultaneously to ply the spur, and ride forward.

Before we had galloped a dozen lengths, a man appeared coming from the opposite direction, and advancing rapidly up the middle of the road. We saw it was the scout Garey; and, once more reining up, we awaited his approach.

I was at the head of the little troop, and as the trapper drew near, I could see his face full under the light of the moon. Its expression was ominous of evil tidings.

He spoke not until he had laid his hand upon the pommel of my saddle, and then only in a subdued and saddened tone. His words were:

'Thar's ugly news, capt'n.'

O that terrible foreboding!

'News?—ill news?' I stammered out; 'what, for Heaven's sake?—speak, Garey!'

'They've been playin' the devil at the rancherie. Them ruffins hez behaved wuss than Injuns would a done. But come forrard, capt'n, an see for yurself. The weemen are clost by hyar at the shanty. Rube's a tryin' to pacify them, poor critters.'

O that terrible foreboding!

I made no response to Garey's last speech, but rode forward as fast as my horse could carry me.

A brace of minutes brought me up to the rancho, and there I beheld a spectacle that caused the blood to curdle in my veins.

CHAPTER LV.

A CRUEL PROSCRIPTION.

The open space in front of the hovel was occupied by a group of women—most of them young girls. There were six or seven; I did not count them. There were two or three men, Mexicans, mixed up in the group. Rube was in their midst, endeavouring in his broken Spanish to give them consolation and assurance of safety. Poor victims! they needed both.

The women were half-naked—some of them simply *en chemise*. Their long black hair fell loosely over their shoulders, looking tossed, wet, and draggly. There was blood upon it; there was blood upon their cheeks in seams half dried, but still dropping. The same horrid red mottled their necks and bosoms, and there was blood upon the hands that had wiped them. A red-brown blotch appeared upon the foreheads of all. In the moonlight, it looked as if the skin had been burnt. I rode closer to one, and examined it: it was a brand—the fire-stamp of red-hot iron. The skin around was scarlet, but in the midst of this halo of inflammation I could distinguish, from their darker hue, the outlines of the two letters I wore upon my button—the well-known 'U. S.'

She who was nearest me raised her hands, and tossing back from her cheeks the thick clustered hair, cried out:

'*Miralo, señor!*'

O Heaven! my flesh crept as I looked upon the source of that crimson hemorrhage. Her ears had been clipped off—they were wanting!

I needed no farther uplifting of their hair to satisfy me that the others had been served in like manner; the red stream still trickling adown their necks was evidence enough.

The men, too, had been similarly abused. Two of them had suffered still farther mutilation. They held up their right arms before my face—not their hands. *There were no hands.* I saw the hanging sleeve, and the blood-steeped bandage on the stump. Their hands had been chopped off at the wrists. Horrid sight!

Both men and women gathered around me, clasping my knees, and uttering prayers and entreaties. No doubt, most of them were known to me by sight; but their features were now unrecognisable. They had been the friends and sweethearts of the corps, and my followers were already addressing them by name. The lovers of one or two were present, and embraced them.

One appeared more richly costumed than the rest, and upon her my eyes had fallen, as I first rode up. I almost dreaded to approach her, as she stood a little apart; but no—it could not be—she was not tall enough; besides, the ruffians would not dare'——

'Your name, señorita?'

'*Conchita, señor—la hija del alcalde.*'

The tears burst from her eyes, mingling with blood as they ran down her cheeks. Oh, that I too could have wept! Poor Wheatley! he was not with us. He had yet to receive the blow: it would soon fall.

My heart was on fire; so were those of my followers. They swore and foamed at the mouth. Some drew pistols and knives, calling out to me to lead them on. Never saw I men in such a frenzy of rage: the most cold-blooded among them seemed to have suddenly gone mad.

I could scarcely restrain them, till we should hear the tale. We guessed it already; but we needed some details to assist us in executing vengeance. It was told by many mouths, interrupting or confirming one another. One of the men was more coherent—Pedro, who used to sell mezcal to the troop. To him we listened. The substance of his story was as follows:

Shortly after we had left the rancheria, it was entered by the guerrilleros with cries of '*Viva Santa Anna! Viva Mexico!*' and '*Death to the Yankees!*' They commenced by breaking open several *tiendas*, and drinking mezcal and whatever they could find. They were joined by the mob of the place—by *leperos* and others. Pedro noticed the *herredero* (blacksmith) and the *matador* (cattle-killer) taking a conspicuous part. There were many women in the mob—the mistresses of the guerrilleros, and others of the town.

After drinking a while, they grew more excited. Then was heard the cry: '*Mueran los Ayankieados!*' and the crowd scattering in different directions, entered the houses, shouting, '*Saquenlos afuera! matenlos!*' (Drag them out! kill them!) The poor girls and all who had been friendly to the *Americanos* were dragged into the plazza amidst the oaths and execrations of the guerrilla, and hisses and hootings from the mob. They were spit upon, called by filthy names, pelted with mud and melon-rinds, and then some of the crowd cried out to *mark* them, so that their friends the *Tejanos* should know them again. The women were more furious than the men, and excited the latter to the deed, calling to the blacksmith:

'*Traiga el fierro! traiga el fierro!*' (Bring the branding-iron!)

Others cried out: '*Sacan las orejas!*' (Cut off their ears!)

The brutal blacksmith and butcher, both half drunk, obeyed the call—willingly, Pedro alleged. The former used the branding-iron, already prepared, while the latter performed his bloody office with the knife of his trade!

Most of the guerrilleros wore masks. The leaders were all masked, and watched the proceedings from the roof of the alcalde's house. One Pedro knew in spite of his disguise; he knew him by his great size and red hair: it was the *salteador*, El Zorro. Others he guessed at; but he had no doubt it was the band of Don Rafael Ijurra—nor had we.

Had they left the rancheria before Pedro and the others came away?

Pedro thought not; he and the other victims, as soon as they got out of the hands of the mob, had fled to the chapparal, and were making for the American camp when met by our scouts. They were straggling along the road one after the other; Rube had detained them by the rancho, till we should come up.

Pedro feared that they were not all—that there were other victims; the alcalde, he feared, had been worse than mutilated—he had been *murdered*.

This last information the poor fellow imparted in a whisper—at the same time casting a sorrowful look towards Conchita. I had not the courage to inquire farther.

The question arose whether we should send back for more men, and wait till they arrived, or advance at once to the rancheria. The former was negatived with unanimous voice. We were strong enough, and vengeance was impatient. I was joyed by the decision; *I* could not have waited.

The women were directed to continue on to the ranger-camp; Pedro, mounted behind one of the men, should go with us. We needed him for purposes of *identification*.

We were about to move forward, when a figure appeared along the road in the direction we were going to take. On coming within sight of us, the figure was seen to skulk and hide in the bushes. Rube and Garey ran rapidly forward, and in a few minutes returned bringing with them a Mexican youth—another of the victims!

He had left the scene of his sufferings somewhat later than the rest.

Was the guerrilla still in the place?

No; they were gone from the village.

'Whither?' was the anxious interrogatory.

They had taken the up-river road, *towards the hacienda de Vargas*. They had passed the boy as he lay concealed among some aloes; he had heard their cries as they rushed past.

'What cries?'

They shouted: '*Mueran al traidor y traidora! Mueran al padre y hija! Isolina la p—t—a!*'

'O merciful God!'

A FISH WITHOUT A POSITION.

What's in a name? I asked myself contemptuously as a passer-by exclaimed: 'What an odd fish!' Now, what *is* an odd fish? 'He whose father was a good old sole, and his mother a little common plaice,' a punster might reply; but not so the frequenters of the Crystal Palace: these will tell you that I am the oddest of odd fish, and that of all the wonders locked up in the water—that great storehouse of nature—there is none greater than myself. Perhaps, kind human, you may not have been among the number of my visitors, and consequently may not have seen me in the Crystal Palace, in one of those watery prisons called aquariums, where my confinement is rendered still more irksome by the gold and silver fish which share my captivity, only, like pert lackeys, to dazzle my eyes by their tinselled liveries, and disturb my repose by their purposeless activity. To you, then, to whom I will presume myself a stranger, I introduce myself as the *Lepidosiren anectens*, or mud-fish, whose ancestral home is in the river Gambia, and whose power of adaptation is so great, that, on the subsidence of the stream, it forms for itself a membranous covering, and enshrouding itself, Cheops-like, in a cocoon of mud, awaits on the river's bank the return of the waters, continuing frequently for eight months in a state of torpor.

To exchange a mud-hut for a palace of crystal may be thought an exaltation not to be despised; but it was not thus with me. My Egyptian bondage was light indeed, compared with the confinement of the voyage, and the subsequent suffering in the Crystal Palace; where I was placed by Captain Chamberlayne, about six months since, in company with two other mud-fish, and the mummy of a grandfather, whose sarcophagus and remains you may see, alas! at the foot of my aquarium. It is not, however, the bodily suffering of which I complain, though I have had enough of that; no, rather it is the mental disorder—the disorder so prevalent in England, and so dreaded by her children—I mean the want of position. We mud-fish had no acknowledged and recognised place. We were like too many whom we saw around us, odd fish like ourselves—perhaps like you, dear human—gasping and struggling for a position, dreading nothing so much as to lose their place in society; nay, we were more to be pitied than these, for we had no position to lose; we were not even classed in the great family of nature. When we claimed to belong to the fishes, we found that our anatomy more nearly allied us to reptiles; when we would have settled on the earth, we were sent back to the Gambia. All this was the more trying, because, some ten years since, a mud-fish had been brought over, and its habits, structure, and peculiarities had been subjects of investigation and speculation. We might, therefore, have reasonably expected our proper place assigned to us immediately on our arrival in England. Not so, however. We were no sooner placed in our new abode, than we found ourselves in the hands of that great reigning power Science—science, who is ever seeking to enlarge her dominion and increase her subjects; ever investigating, and never wearying; examining all causes, judging all effects, despising no means, compassing all ends. We became, then, subjects of science. The naturalist examined our four propellers—scarcely legs, scarcely fins—our snake-like body, and animal head; the medical world descanted on our lungs and digestive organs; and the mechanist commented on our rudder-like tail and peculiar 'build:' and so the scientific world discussed, and the everyday world wondered, and the ignorant world laughed; and to-day we are fishes; yesterday, we were reptiles; to-morrow, perhaps, we shall be mere links!

There were not those wanting who tried to find a family likeness for us in England; some asserting that Camden and Fuller had made mention of us among the worthies of Lancashire: the one saying that 'at a place called Sefton in the above county, upon turning up the turf, men find a black deadish water, with small fishes therein;' and the other, that 'the men of this place go a-fishing with spades and mattocks.' Some, again, traced in us a strong resemblance to eels. Now, this comparison would have been odious to us, had not the eel been called by the ancients the offspring of Jove, and had it not, too, been consecrated by Roman tears; for it was when Crassus was reproached in the senate, by Domitius, with 'Foolish Crassus! you wept for your murena' (or lamprey), that Crassus retorted: 'That was more than you did for your two wives.' Eels, therefore, are a matter of history, and, so far, we were not offended; but when we were associated with lizards, and even the low-bred, ditch-loving newt, our indignation knew no bounds. We are not cold-blooded—no, by the three ventricles of our African hearts, the blood of the Pharaohs boiled within us at the insult offered to the mummies of our ancestors! Disputes without soon created dissensions within, and our new abode became the scene of many quarrels. Our morning meal of frogs was seldom partaken of without contention; and one day, in a frenzy of passion, I fell upon and devoured one of my companions, which had raised a question about my fins. This act of fury was much resented by my remaining relative, which sought many occasions of revenge, and spent his miserable existence in reviling at me and at fate, and in pining for his native mud; until one day, a desperate leap into the tank below, saved him at once from my pursuit and the investigation of science. He sleeps, as I understand, at the bottom of the tank—it may be, in a cocoon of English mud. Meanwhile, I, sad, solitary, and almost blind, drag on my wretched life, a creature without a position, an intermediate form, a chrysalis of the waters, neither flesh nor fowl, perhaps not even an 'odd fish.'

THE EVENING-STAR.

The evening-star watched by the moon,
In a sweet trance of sad devotion;
Still fond and faithful all alone,
Within the heaven's wide ocean—
Alone, untiring in her love,
She sat while dews were round her weeping,
'Mid all the heavenly sentinels,
The only one unsleeping.

Thus I will be, dear love, to thee,
When night and loneliness enfold thee;
Still whispering low and fervently,
What in bright days I told thee—
Still gazing from my heart of hearts,
On that loved face divinely beaming,
'Mid world and worldlings all alone,
Wrapped in my golden dreaming!

E. O. D.

PARADISE OF THE OLD.

I have no means of obtaining any satisfactory tables to shew the proportions which different ages bear to one another in China, or the average mortality at different periods of human life; yet to every decade of life the Chinese apply some special designation. The age of ten is called 'the Opening Degree;' twenty, 'Youth expired;' thirty, 'Strength and Marriage;' forty, 'Officially Apt;' fifty, 'Error-knowing;' sixty, 'Cycle-closing;' seventy, 'Rare Bird of Age;' eighty, 'Rusty-visaged;' ninety, 'Delayed;' one hundred, 'Age's Extremity.' Among the Chinese, the amount of reverence grows with the number of years. I made, some years ago, the acquaintance of a Buddhist priest living in the convent of Tien Tung near Ningpo, who was more than a century old, and whom people of rank were in the habit of visiting, in order to shew their respect and to obtain his autograph. He had the civility to give me a very fair specimen of his handwriting. There are not only many establishments for the reception of the aged, but the penal code provides severe punishments for those who refuse to relieve the poor in their declining years. Age may also be pleaded in extenuation of crime and in mitigation of punishment. Imperial decrees sometimes order presents to be given to all indigent old people in the empire.—*Sir John Bowring in the Transactions of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Part V.*

DRESS-PARTIES IN ANCIENT EGYPT.

One very usual subject in the tombs, is the reception of guests at a party; and Egyptian artists, fully alive to caricature, have sometimes shewn that the little follies of gossip, display of finery, and conceit, were as common in those days as in later times. Here, a man of fashion arriving in his curricle long after the other guests are assembled, thinks to increase his consequence by this affectation, as well as by the number of his attendants and running-footmen; there, women examine, with the eyes of envy or curiosity, the jewellery of a neighbour; and the profusion of gold and silver vases set out on the sideboard, proclaim, by their utter uselessness on the occasion, that love of display alone procured them a place in the festive chamber. In another place, the consequence of the master and mistress of the house is indicated by the submissive obeisance made to them by the dancers and musicians hired to entertain the company; and as the principal people who gave these entertainments were of the priestly class, we learn, that however they might lecture the people on the propriety of considering this life a mere passage to a future state, and of mortifying their appetites for pleasure, they were themselves by no means averse to the good things of this world, and enjoyed their comforts like the rest of the community.—*Wilkinson's Egyptians in the Time of the Pharaohs.*

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CAPTAIN DODD AT SEA.

In the year 1813, there was launched upon the Clyde a vessel, whose name, when the history of ocean steam-navigation comes to be written, will be honourably remembered in connection with the first steam-voyage upon British seas. This vessel was the *Argyle*, a packet of seventy tons' register, measuring in her keel seventy-nine feet, with sixteen feet of beam, and fitted with engines of fourteen horse-power, and paddle-wheels of nine feet in diameter. She had two cabins —one in the forecastle, the other in the stern. In her waist was the engine, with the boiler on the starboard side, and the cylinder and fly-wheel on the larboard. Her smoke was carried off by a funnel, which also did duty as a mast, and was rigged with a large square sail. A gallery, upon which the cabin-windows opened, projected on each side so as to form a continuous deck, interrupted only by the paddle-boxes—an arrangement which had the further effect of making the vessel appear larger than she really was. On the outside of the gallery, eighteen large port-holes were painted, which, with the two she displayed upon her stern, made the *Argyle* look so formidable to those to whom a steamer was a novelty, that it was stated in a Committee of the House of Commons by several naval officers that, if they had met her at sea, they would have endeavoured to reconnoitre before attempting to bring her to.

The packet, such as we have described her, had been plying for a year between Glasgow and Greenock, when she was purchased by a London company with the intention of running her between that city and Margate. But a serious difficulty had first to be overcome. It was necessary to bring her round by sea from the Clyde to the Thames; and, notwithstanding the success which had six years before attended the enterprise of Stevens of Hoboken in navigating a steamer from the Hudson to the Delaware, it was the general opinion of nautical men that vessels of the new construction were unfitted to brave the open sea. There was then in London a man of the name of Dodd, who had served in the navy, had afterwards distinguished himself as an engineer and architect,* and who finally, driven by misfortunes to intemperance, almost literally died in the streets a beggar. To him the task was intrusted. Dodd accordingly arrived in Glasgow in April 1815, and with a crew of eight persons—a mate, an engineer, a stoker, four seamen and a cabin-boy, boldly put to sea about the middle of May. His voyage at first was far from auspicious. The weather was stormy, the sea ran high in the strait which separates Scotland from Ireland, and, either through ignorance or negligence, the pilot during the night altered the course of the vessel, so that they ran a great risk of being wrecked. Dodd tells us that he had given orders that the steamer should be steered so as to gain the Irish coast by the morning; but at break of day a heavy gale was blowing; and it was discovered that, instead of being off the coast of Ireland, they were within half a league of a lee-shore, rock-bound, about two miles to the north of Port-Patrick. To attempt to beat off, in the teeth of the gale, by the united power of steam and sails, Dodd found to be impossible. Depending, therefore, entirely on the efficiency of his engine, he laid the vessel's head directly to windward, and ordered the log to be kept constantly going. The plan succeeded. The vessel began slowly to clear the shore, going direct in the wind's eye at the rate of something more than three knots an hour. Having thus acquired a sufficient offing, he bore away for Loch Ryan, and gained the Irish coast. On the 24th of May he entered the Liffey, being firmly of opinion that no other power than that of steam could have saved the vessel from destruction.

We have hitherto followed the account of the voyage as published by Dodd himself in the *Morning Chronicle* of June 15, 1815, and as afterwards embodied in his evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons. Henceforth, however, in recounting the further fortunes of the adventurers, we shall avail ourselves, in preference, of the equally authentic, but far more picturesque narrative of Mr Weld, the secretary and historian of the Royal Society, by whom Dodd was accidentally joined in Dublin. The following extract from that gentleman's journal at once exhibits his reasons for embarking in the enterprise, and describes very pleasingly the excitement caused in the Irish capital by the arrival of the *Thames*, as Dodd, before leaving Glasgow, had re-christened the *Argyle:*

'On the 25th May 1815, I heard by accident that a steam-vessel had arrived at Dublin. I immediately went to see her, and found her on the point of starting with a number of curious visitors upon an experimental trip in the bay. I was so much pleased with all that I saw and heard concerning her, that, having previously intended to proceed to London, I determined to request Captain Dodd to receive me as a passenger, and to be permitted to accompany him throughout the voyage. He at once consented; and my wife having resolved on sharing the dangers of the voyage with me, we proceeded to make the necessary arrangements for our departure'—arrangements which, we may add parenthetically, comprehended all and probably more than would now be required for a voyage to America. 'On the 28th of May, being Sunday, we left the Liffey at noon. Many persons embarked with us from curiosity, but only to cross the bay as far as Dunleary [now Kingstown], where they landed. Unfortunately, the sea was very rough, which occasioned the most violent sea-sickness amongst the passengers. Several naval officers were on board, who were unanimous in declaring it to be their firm opinion that the vessel could not live long in heavy seas, and that there would be much danger in venturing far from shore. I deemed it right to inform my wife of this opinion; but, although she suffered greatly from sea-sickness, she persisted in her intention of accompanying me; and that evening, after having passed some hours on land at the house of a friend, the vessel put to sea, we being the only passengers. The shore was covered with several thousands of spectators, who cheered and wished us a prosperous voyage.'

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* He projected the Thames Tunnel, proposing to carry it across from Gravesend to Tilbury at an estimated cost of under L.16,000!

The sea was comparatively calm as the vessel steamed into the Bay of Dalkey, and the passengers calculated on a pleasant voyage during the night; but when beyond the shelter of the coast, they found it to be as rough as ever. 'The motion of the vessel differed essentially from that of a sailing-vessel; the action of the wheels on the water at each side prevented her rolling. The most disagreeable movement was felt when the waves struck the vessel on the beam; but even then, her peculiar construction was advantageous, for the coverings which enclosed the wheels acted as buoys, and contributed to keep the vessel afloat. On such occasions, the noise produced by the sudden compression of the air within the wheel-boxes was frightful. After having sustained a concussion on one side, a second was generally felt on the other by a sort of reaction, and a third, but much more feeble, succeeded, after which the vessel preserved a regular motion for several minutes. I do not recollect ever experiencing more than three of these concussions in rapid succession, and their invariable effect was to terminate the rolling motion, which sometimes lasts a long time in sailing-vessels. It cannot be denied that the concussions occasioned temporary alarm, accompanied as they were by the noise which has been mentioned, and by the shaking of the whole vessel; but no permanent inconvenience resulted: on the contrary, the equilibrium, as I have stated, was soon re-established, and the vessel, as sailors say, pursued a *dry course*, bounding so lightly over the waves that during the entire voyage we were not once wetted even by the spray.'

The voyagers soon left far behind them all the vessels which had sailed from Dublin with the same tide, and the following morning about nine o'clock were off Wexford. The dense smoke which issued from its mast-chimney being observed from the heights above the town, it was concluded that the vessel was on fire. All the pilots immediately put off to its assistance; and nothing could exceed their surprise, mingled with disappointment, when they saw that the ship was in no danger whatever, and that their hopes of salvage were at an end.

The weather had now become so stormy, that Captain Dodd determined to put into the port, his great object, as Mr Weld says, being to navigate the vessel safely to London, rather than, by using great dispatch, to expose her to unnecessary risk.

At two o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, May 30, Dodd put again to sea, and steered for St David's Head, the most westerly point of Wales. During the passage across St George's Channel, one of the blades of the starboard paddle-wheel got out of order. The engine was stopped, and the blade cut away. Some hours after, a similar accident befell the larboard-wheel, which was remedied in the same manner. The loss of one blade in each paddle made no apparent difference in the progress of the vessel. Fortunately, when the accident occurred, the sea was very calm, and all the shoals had been passed.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, twelve hours after leaving Wexford, the steamer reached the Pass of Ramsay, between the island of that name and St David's Head. There the adventurers remained for three hours to oil the engine, and to give the stoker, who had not quitted his post for an instant since leaving Wexford, a little rest. There, too, as at Wexford, boats put out from different parts of the coast to the assistance of the vessel, which they believed to be on fire. Leaving Ramsay, they commenced steaming through the straits and across St Bride's Bay. The weather had now become unfavourable, and the sea ran alarmingly high in the bay. 'The waves, indeed, were of such magnitude, that, when ingulfed between them, the coast, although very lofty, could not be seen; but the vessel held her way most gallantly over all.' A small fleet of merchant-vessels left the Straits of Ramsay with the voyagers; but in the passage of the bay alone, the latter had left them so far behind, as to be able to see only their masts.

On the south side of St Bride's Bay, between Skomar Island and the mainland, there is a dangerous passage called Jack Sound. Their pilot warned them against attempting this passage excepting at high-water, and with a favourable wind, as there were several formidable whirlpools which would seize the vessel, and carry her on the rocks. Captain Dodd, however, who knew the power of his engine, insisted on going through the sound, in order to save five hours and another night at sea. 'The pilot,' says Mr Weld, 'reiterated his remonstrances, at the same time trembling with fear; but we passed through all the whirlpools with the greatest ease. Nothing, however, can be conceived more frightful than the aspect of some of the rocks, and especially of those called *The Bishop and his Clerks*, which are the scene, annually, of numerous shipwrecks. Had we been in a sailing-vessel, our position would have been most perilous; but our steam was all-powerful, and brought us safely into Milford Haven.' As they were steaming up the harbour, they met the government mail-packet proceeding from Milford to Waterford with all her sails spread. They had passed her about a quarter of a mile, when Captain Dodd determined to send some letters by her to Ireland. The *Thames* was immediately put about, and in a few minutes she was alongside of the packet-ship, and sailed round her, notwithstanding the latter continued under-way. The captain and passengers wrote a few letters, put them on board the packet, sailed round her once again, and then continued their course to Milford.

During the whole of the 31st of May and the 1st of June, the adventurers had ample occupation at Milford in satisfying the curiosity of numerous naval officers who were anxious to see the *Thames*, and to examine her engine, as well as to test her sailing-powers. It became necessary also to cleanse the boiler, which had not been done since leaving Glasgow. It had appeared to Mr Weld on the passage that it was becoming filled by degrees with salt, and he had questioned the engineer on the subject, but had been assured that not an atom had been formed there. Of course, when the boiler was examined, it was discovered that Mr Weld was right, and the engineer wrong.

Late on the evening of the 31st, they again put to sea, in company with the *Myrtle* sloop-of-war, whose captain (Bingham) and a company of ladies were aboard the steamer, anxious to see how she would behave in a rough sea. The *Myrtle* was obliged to hoist royals and studding-sails to keep up with the *Thames*, and at last, crowding all sail, she could get very little ahead. 'Had the steam been fully up,' says Mr Weld in a private letter, 'we should have beaten her. But our great superiority was yet to be shewn. Dodd, in his gallantry, determined to carry the ladies back to Milford, instead of consigning them to an open boat; which he accordingly performed, and left the sloop-of-war far behind; and when we returned to go to sea, we found she had anchored, being unable,' owing to the failure of the wind, 'to reach her former station.'

On Friday morning, the voyagers were in the middle of the Bristol Channel, with no land visible; but towards evening, they discovered the high coast which terminates England on the west. As the weather, however, again assumed a gloomy aspect, their new pilot—for the other had been discharged at Milford—judged that it would be imprudent that night to double the Land's End, so that Dodd determined to shape his course towards St Ives. On approaching the shore, a crowd of small vessels was seen making towards the steamer with all possible rapidity by means of sails and oars. At St Ives, as elsewhere, the alarm had been taken on seeing a vessel, supposed to be on fire, steering towards the town, and all the disposable craft immediately put to sea. 'The pilot-boats of this station,' says Mr Weld, 'are, without exception, the finest I have ever seen. They carry two sails and six rowers. When they were told that we did not want them, they tacked about, and severally sought to outsail each other. In the course of about seven miles, we outran all of them upwards of a mile. These sea-faring men then told us, that our vessel was the first that could surpass them in swiftness, and that they easily approached ships-of-war and custom-house cutters, which are esteemed the quickest sailers. All the rocks commanding St Ives were covered with spectators; and when we entered the harbour, the aspect of our vessel appeared to occasion as much surprise amongst the inhabitants as the ships of Captain Cook produced amongst the islanders of the South Sea. This was no novelty to us, for wherever we had coasted along, we were the object of equal astonishment, until the public papers, in announcing the arrival of a steam-packet in the Irish Channel, and giving some explanation of the mode in which the vessel was moved, in some measure diminished the wonder of the spectators, though not their curiosity.'

As the port of St Ives affords no shelter from the north-east wind, and as it began to blow very heavily from that point, it was found advisable to carry the vessel into the port of Hale, four miles distant, where anchor was cast at the mouth of the river, in a position of perfect safety.

The operation of doubling the Land's End had from the first been represented as by far the most difficult and dangerous part of the voyage; and Mr and Mrs Weld had accordingly gone across the neck of land to the south coast, where they thought of remaining until the vessel came round. But as one of the motives which had led them to undertake the voyage was its difficulty as well as its novelty, they resolved, instead of waiting for the *Thames*, to return to Hale, and to brave with the steamer's crew the dangers of the passage round the Land's End.

At four o'clock on Monday, the 5th of June, the weather appearing milder, they accordingly re-embarked; but in doubling Cornwall Head, the most northern of those two great promontories which terminate England on the west, a tremendous swell from the Atlantic met them, whilst the tide, which ran strongly down St George's Channel, combining with the swell, raised the waves to such a height, as to render their position in the highest degree alarming. The vessel seemed to suffer considerably, and the repeated concussions against the paddle-boxes terrified the pilot, who now heard them for the first time. Night approached without any port being within reach, excepting that which they had left, and which was now too distant to think of regaining. Such was the state of things, when 'Captain Dodd observed that the vessel sailed better before the waves than in any other direction; he therefore spread some sails, and made a long tack, close-hauled, so as to get out of the latitude when the swell struggled against the tide; and at the end of some hours, we doubled the Land's End, and found ourselves in a comparatively tranquil sea. We were then at the entrance of the British Channel, which is always calmer than the Irish Sea; the sun shone out in great brilliancy, and the coast unfolded all its beauties of woods, villages, and rich cultivation, as we glided along.'

At eleven o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, June 6, the adventurers arrived at Plymouth. The harbour-master, who had never seen a steam-vessel before, was as much struck with astonishment when he boarded the *Thames*, as a child is in getting possession of a new plaything. 'The sailors ran in crowds to the sides of their vessels as we passed them, and mounting the rigging, gave vent to their observations in a most amusing manner.'

The whole of Wednesday was taken up in shewing the capabilities of the steamer to the port-admiral and to the naval officers who went on board.

At noon on the following day they left Plymouth, and steamed, without interruption, to Portsmouth, where they arrived at eleven o'clock in the morning of Friday, having accomplished 155 miles in twenty-three hours.

At Portsmouth, astonishment and admiration were, if possible, more strongly evinced than elsewhere. Tens of thousands of spectators assembled to gaze at the *Thames;* and the number of vessels that crowded around her was so great, that it became necessary to request the port-admiral to assign the voyagers a guard, in order to preserve some degree of order. They entered the harbour in the most brilliant style, steaming in, with the assistance of the wind and tide, at the rate of from twelve to fourteen miles an hour. A court-martial was sitting at the time on board the *Gladiator* frigate, but the novelty of the steam-boat presented an irresistible attraction; and the whole court went off to her excepting the president, who was obliged by etiquette to retain his seat until the court was regularly adjourned.

On Saturday, the 10th of June, the port-admiral, Sir Edward Thornborough, sent his band and a guard of marines at an early hour on board, and soon afterwards followed in person, accompanied by three admirals, eighteen post-captains, and a large number of ladies. The morning was spent very pleasantly in steaming amongst the fleet, and running over to the Isle of Wight. The admiral and all the naval officers expressed themselves delighted with the *Thames*.

From Portsmouth the steamer proceeded to Margate, which was reached on Sunday morning the 11th, where she remained until the following day, when the captain and passengers embarked for their final trip, at half-past eight in the morning, and about six in the evening arrived at Limehouse, where they moored. As usual, they passed everything on the Thames—all the fast-sailing Gravesend boats, pleasure-boats, West-Indiamen, &c. The following table, taken from Mr Weld's journal, shews the distances from Dublin in nautical miles, and the time occupied in performing them: From Dublin to Kingstown, 8—1½ hours; Kingstown to Wexford, 67—13¾ hours; Wexford to Ramsay, 63—11 hours; Ramsay to Milford, 18—4½ hours; Milford to St Ives, 110—19 hours; St Ives to Plymouth, 118—19 hours; Plymouth to Portsmouth, 155—23 hours; Portsmouth to Margate, 129—20¾ hours; Margate to Limehouse, 90—9 hours: total, 758 nautical miles—121½ hours. The *Thames*, we may mention, carried fifteen tons of coal, her consumpt being, on the average, a ton for every hundred miles. The distance between Portsmouth and Margate was, however, performed with an expenditure of something less than that quantity.

So ended this memorable voyage, the first, if we except the comparatively insignificant adventure of Stevens in America, ever performed by a steam-boat on the open seas. And it seems strange that, with such satisfactory practical evidence in favour of ocean steam-navigation, steam-packets were not at once adopted, and that it should have been left for a Scottish company in 1818 to institute a line of steamers between Greenock and Belfast, the first of which, the *Rob Roy*, of about thirty horse-power, and ninety tons' register, was built and launched by David Napier in that year.

A MOTLEY COLLECTION OF MOTTOES.

The honourable and facetious Judge Haliburton, in the course of an address lately delivered by him at Manchester, is reported to have said, among other sly pokes in the national ribs which he took the opportunity of administering, that he had been 'a good deal amused by looking over a book that applied to no part of the world but England, called the Peerage-book, and reading the quaint mottoes of the nobility contained therein.' I confess to having been inexpressibly shocked when I read this irreverent paragraph. My attention was called to it by the extraordinary demeanour of my wife. Instead of the calm and supercilious glance with which that exemplary and highly connected woman usually skims through the columns of the *Morning Post* *not* containing the fashionable intelligence, I observed with astonishment that her light-blue eyes flashed with indignation, her aquiline nose curled with scorn, her flaxen ringlets quivered with emotion, and her whole slim and aristocratic, not to say bony, person underwent the feminine and expressive operation of 'bridling up.' And no wonder! Every right-minded and well-regulated British matron would shudder with horror at such an unprincipled attack upon her favourite reading. Oh, sacrilegious Sam Slick! when you can connect the awful volume that forms a manual of devotion to thousands of the best families in England, with anything so low as fun or amusement—when you can treat the idol before which society, in this country, bows down and worships, with no more respect than if it were a ridiculous Chinese *joss*, your organ of veneration must, I fear, be very imperfectly developed. And oh, ye men of Manchester! oh, ye profane cotton-manufacturers! ye have much to answer for, if, as is reported of you, ye encouraged the colonial wag with shouts of applause! 'No, no, Justice Haliburton,' I indignantly exclaimed. 'You may laugh, and welcome, at our Peace Society—you may twit the heads of our colonial department with knowing nothing whatever about the colonies intrusted to their charge—you may crack your jokes about our army administration—you may even quiz our prime-minister! but there is one thing you may *not* do—you may not make fun of our Peerage-book: *that* time-honoured institution, at least, must be held sacred.'

Such were my sentiments as I laid down the newspaper and opened Debrett, with a view of refuting the aspersions that had been cast upon its aristocratic pages. I say *were*, because, to my astonishment, I discovered that the illustrious Clockmaker was right. The mottoes of the nobility *are* quaint—very quaint. There are between 400 and 500 of them, and an exceedingly queer and miscellaneous jumble of odds-and-ends they are—quite a literary hotch-potch, consisting of moral maxims, quotations from Horace, specimens of alliteration, battle-cries, jingling rhymes, patriotic sentiments, atrocious puns, and wise saws, in all languages—ancient, modern, and medieval.

Latin appears to be the favourite heraldic dialect, and then French; English comes third; and the remainder are in Irish, Gaelic, Welsh, Italian, Spanish, and Greek. Of Irish mottoes, there are three specimens. *Lam dearg Erin* is the red hand of Ireland that distinguishes the Lords O'Neill; and *Crom a boo* and *Shannet a boo* form the war-cries of the Duke of Leinster and Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey. *A boo*, which we recognise at once, from its eccentric termination, as a sample of the purest Milesian, means *for ever;* and Crom and Shannet are names indicating the respective families to which they belong. Crom was a castle in the county Limerick, that formerly belonged to the Dukes of Leinster. Of Italian mottoes, there are two instances—that of the Dukes of Bedford, *Che sarà sarà* (What will be, will be), and Lord Dormer's *Cio che Dio vuole, io voglio* (What God wills, I will). The only Spanish one belongs to the Duke of Marlborough: *Fiel pero desdichado* (Faithful though unfortunate). Greek gets only half a motto, but of that I shall have occasion to speak hereafter; and the English, French, and Latin ones are, like the advantages in an auctioneer's advertisement, 'too numerous to particularise.' The gems of the collection, however, that I have kept for the last as a kind of *bonne bouche*, are undoubtedly Welsh. I warn the reader beforehand not by any means to attempt to pronounce the fearfully and wonderfully constructed syllables I am about to place before him. He is merely to wonder at and admire them, as he would some rare and curious animal in the Zoological Gardens, which he is requested by the keeper not on any account to touch. For instance, would anything short of a tetanic convulsion of the epiglottis produce the sounds necessary to convey the meaning—if meaning it have—of Lord Mostyn's motto: *Heb dduw Heb ddym Dduwadygan?* Six poor unfortunate little vowels to eighteen tall consonants! They are like Falstaff's 'half-pennyworth of bread' to his intolerable quantity of sack. In the subscription of Lord Dinorben's coat-of-arms, *Rhad duw a rhyddid*, they are jostled in an even more unmannerly way. If mottoes are to be considered in any degree emblematical of the dispositions of their owners, the Welsh noblemen must be very eccentric characters indeed!

After a careful perusal of the Peerage-book—and a very fatiguing operation it is—I find that the mottoes of the nobility may be divided into five distinct classes: the highly moral, the characteristic, laconic, eccentric, and comic.

The first-mentioned class, I am happy to say, greatly preponderate. Under this head I include the loyal, patriotic, philanthropic, and sentimental. *Dieu et mon droit* heads a long list of equally pious and manly sentiments; and there are no less than thirty mottoes commencing with the word *Virtue*, and praising its beauty and power. Supposing each nobleman to adopt his own motto: 'Virtue,' says the Earl of Abingdon in Latin, 'is stronger than a battering-ram;' 'Virtue is a sheet-anchor,' cries Lord Gardner; 'It is equal,' in the opinion of Lord Howard of Effingham, 'to a thousand shields;' 'Virtue alone ennobles,' adds Lord Wallscourt; 'It overcometh envy,' exclaims the Earl of Cornwallis; 'It flourishes for ever,' chimes in Lord Belmore with enthusiasm. There is nothing like virtue, cry half-a-dozen other noblemen. *Virtue and faith*, *virtue and labour*, *virtue and the protection of Heaven*, 'virtue, and nothing but virtue,' sing this aristocratic chorus, is our 'watchword, our shield, our buckler, our guide, counsellor, and friend.' It is gratifying to know that faith is nearly as much appreciated as virtue by the hereditary nobility of England—*Faith and love*, *Faith and hope*, *Faith and courage*, *Faith and fortitude*, being the burden of a great number of their mottoes. The advantages of strength and courage are much insisted on, but generally in connection with one or more of the cardinal virtues. *Forte et fidele* is the motto of Lord Talbot of Malahide; 'Nothing is difficult to the brave and faithful,' embodies the principle of Lord Muskerry. Honour and honesty are of course in great request: 'Honour is the reward of virtue,' says the Earl of Ferrers, and 'of fidelity,' adds Lord Boston; *Honesta quam splendida!* ejaculates Viscount Barrington in a burst of admiration—'How magnificent are the acquirements of honour!' Others breathe the most devoted loyalty, the most exalted patriotism, the purest philanthropy—in fact, if the English nobility only act up to their mottoes, the House of Lords must be a perfect tabernacle of goodness!

Characteristic mottoes are principally the property of illustrious naval and military heroes, or distinguished lawyers, who have been raised to the peerage for professional achievements. Thus, Lord Nelson's was *Palmam qui meruit ferat*, although a more appropriate one for Britain's greatest naval commander would have been the immortal sentence imperishably connected with his name: 'England expects that every man will do his duty.' The Duke of Wellington's, *Fortune, the companion of valour*, though applicable enough to the great captain's career, bore no reference to his deeds of arms, it having been used by his family for many generations. The *Avancez* of Lord Hill is a model motto for a soldier—short, sharp, and decisive; and Lord Hood's *Ventis secundis*, a sailor's grateful expression of how much he was indebted to the fickle element for his success. Now-a-days, however, an admiral would be more inclined to sing the praises of steam. Peers sprung from the law have been generally either practical or legal in their choice of a sentence to illustrate their escutcheon. Thus, the dignity of labour is asserted in the *Labore* of Lord King, and the *Labor ipse voluptas* of Lord Tenterden. Lord Abinger's is *Suis stat viribus* (He stands in his own strength). Lord Brougham is for 'The king, the law, and the people;' Earl Camden, 'The judgment of our peers, or the law of the land.' Lord Ellenborough, whose patronymic was Law, and who may be said to have been so both by name and nature, selected *Compositum jus fasque animi*, which Debrett rather freely renders, Law and equity. Lord Erskine, in his motto, upholds *Trial by Jury;* and in *Ultra pergere* (to push on and keep moving) is exhibited Lord Lyndhurst's love of progress, and no doubt the secret of his high position. Bishops are supposed to be so upright and learned, so full of Latin, Greek, and morality, that they require neither mottoes nor supporters—at all events, they have none.

On the principle, I suppose, that brevity is the soul of wit, a number of mottoes consist of only one word. Lord Hawke has, very appropriately, a falcon for his crest, and *Strike* for his motto, as the first lord of that name *did*, most effectually, when he pounced upon the French fleet off the West Indies, in the year 1747. The adjective *Firm* characterises Lord Stair; and the word *Fight* appears to constitute the rule of conduct of the pugnacious Earls of Rosslyn. *Thus* is the extremely short and incomprehensible watchword of Lord St Vincent; and the *Through* of the Duke of Hamilton is only partly explained by his crest, which is a tree with a frame-saw nearly 'through' it. I have no doubt that thereby hangs a tale. Leaving the monosyllables, we come to the short but singularly expressive maxim of the Dukes of Buccleuch, who, judging from their motto, appear to think that the whole duty of man lies in the verb *Amo*. The Lords Dundas hopefully believe that all one has to do to get on in the world is to *try*—*Essayez* cry they, and I think they are right. The Earls of Elgin, descended from Bruce, are modest, yet proud: in *Fuimus* (We have been), they point, of course, to the fact that the Bruces were once the royal line of Scotland. *Grip fast*, say the tenacious Lords Rothes, whose crest, to harmonise with their motto, instead of a mild-looking demi-griffin proper, should have been a bull-dog rampant. *I dare*, cries the bold Earl of Carnwath. *Je pense*, says the meditative Lord Wemyss. *Je pense plus*, replies the Earl of Mar, in a friendly spirit of emulation. *Lead on* is the war-cry of Lord Hotham, which is hardly so chivalrous as the *Follow me* of the Marquis of Breadalbane. *Ready, aye Ready*, is the characteristic motto of the Napier family. If a pen could be substituted for the crescent which, grasped by a hand, forms their crest, the sentence would be still more appropriate. *Agincourt*, *St Vincent*, and *Algiers*, are words commemorative of deeds performed by the ancestors of Lords Wodehouse, Radstock, and Exmouth. The motto of Lord Mexborough, *Be fast*, can hardly be considered good advice to the younger branches of the family, if the meaning of the word 'fast' be taken according to the modern acceptation of the term.

A great many will be found to merit more particularly the expression applied to them by the Attaché. The *Flecti non frangi* of Lord Palmerston is curiously opposed in spirit to the *Frangas non flectes* of the Duke of Sutherland. *Bella, horrida Bella* is the queer motto of the ancient family of O'Bryen; and *Let Curzon hold what Curzon held*, apparently points to some time when a Lord Howe, tenacious of his rights, refused to let go, or tried to get back, some family property. The quintessence of eccentricity, however, is displayed in the incomprehensible motto of the Marquis of Conyngham; no one but Sir Bernard Burke could unveil the mystery that lies hid in the words, *Over fork over!*

Others derive their claim to notice from an absurd jingle or alliteration which appears to have been the principal object of the original framers of mottoes. The *Numen lumen, astra castra* of the Earl of Balcarres is a specimen of the former, and *Dum spiro spero* of Viscount Dillon of the latter. A dozen such might be cited: the *Fortiter, fideliter, feliciter* of Lord Rathdown—*Un roy, une foy, une loy*, of the Marquis Clanricarde—*Data fata secutus, Non quo sed quomodo, Nunc aut nunquam, Via trita via tuta, Tâche sans tâche;* and many more.

I now approach a most distressing part of my subject. Dr Johnson's opinion of punning is well known. 'A man who would make a pun,' said the great lexicographer, 'would pick a pocket.' Judged by this standard, the morals of the ancestors of many of our highest nobility must have been in a most lamentable condition. Such a collection of flagrant quibbles and atrocious puns as are contained in the pages of Debrett, it has seldom been my lot to meet with even in *Punch*. There are some, indeed, which that privileged joker would not have the face to insert without the explanation, that they came from his insane contributor, or were dropped into his letter-box by some miscreant in the garb of a gentleman, who made his escape before a policeman could be found to take him in custody. The least harmless of these heraldic outrages is the double-faced motto of the Vernon family—*Vernon semper floret*, which may mean, as an interrogation, Does not the spring always flourish? or affirmatively, Vernon always flourishes. This is bad enough; but what will the unsuspecting reader say when I tell him that the motto unblushingly paraded before the world by the Lords Fortescue is FORTE *scutum, salus ducum?* or that *Cavendo tutus* is a feeble and unprincipled pun on the family name of the Duke of Devonshire, whose patronymic is Cavendish? In the same way, the paternal appellation of the Earl of Enniskillen being Cole, his motto is *Deum* COLE, *regem serva!* In the apparently innocent sentences, *Ne vile* FANO and NE VILE *velis* are embodied, I regret to say, the family names of the Earls of Westmoreland and Abergavenny, Fane and Neville. In the laudable sentiment, *Numini et patriæ* ASTO, the designation of its proprietor, Lord Ashton, is surreptitiously shadowed forth; and it is difficult to believe that in the TEMPLA *quam dilecta* of the Dukes of Buckingham, their hereditary cognomen of Temple designedly lies hidden. The malice aforethought displayed in the *Fare fac* of Lord Fairfax, and the *Festina lente* of Lord On-slow, will rouse the indignation of all honest men. I have much pleasure in dragging the two following literary man-traps to light; they might perhaps escape the notice of a casual observer; but they are none the less dangerous for being cleverly concealed. Lord Falmouth's motto is, *Patience passe science*, apparently indicating, in the French language, the simple maxim, that patience surpasses knowledge, but really covering an unworthy quibble on the word patience; and in Lord Maynard's MA*nus justa* NARD*us*, the first and last syllable of his name are contained in the first and last word of his motto. After this, I seem to lose all confidence in human nature. I look through Debrett with a jaundiced eye, and fancy I can detect a pun lurking under every coat-of-arms. I fear to trace the innocent-looking aphorism, Bear and Forbear, to its heraldic resting-place, lest I should discover that its accompanying crest is a bruin's head gules, or a couple of animals of the same species, standing on their hind-legs, and collared and chained *argent*, as supporters.

The first Marquis of Londonderry may have harboured no evil designs when he chose the motto *Metuenda corolla draconis*, but after the melancholy instances I have quoted, how can I be sure of his honesty? I know that an ancestor of his raised a troop of horse when Londonderry was invested in the reign of William III.—the family has always been a cavalry family—they have for supporters a couple of hussars, one on a bay, the other on a gray, *guardant;* what assurance, then, have I that in the words, 'a dragon's crest is to be feared,' a horrible *double-entendre* has not been perpetrated, and that the crest or plume of a *dragoon's* helmet is not covertly alluded to? Again, is it my fault that I eye with suspicion the eccentric motto of the Lysaght family? Instead of being the exclamation of some member of a medieval Peace Society inveighing against the atrocities of war, may not the words bear reference rather to a domestic combat, in which some noble and indignant husband has apostrophised his beautiful but rebellious better-half as 'Bella, horrida Bella?' The well-known fact that Arabella was a favourite name for high-born ladies during the middle ages, reduces almost to a certainty this dreadful suspicion. In the same way, I look at the *Reparabit cornua* PHŒBE of Lord Polwarth as I would at a barrel of gunpowder. My distrust is painfully augmented when I discover that the feminine element preponderates to an alarming extent in his coat-of-arms. As a crest, I find a lady richly attired, holding in her right hand the sun, and in her left hand a crescent, while, for supporters, are two mermaids holding mirrors in their hands, *all proper*. Is not this confirmation strong that some sublunary Phœbe is thus obliquely hinted at? But I will not pursue this melancholy subject any further. There is no necessity to multiply instances of the mental imbecility that must have pervaded society in general, when such lamentable attempts at jocularity were current among the upper classes. They were, indeed, the dark ages. One more example, and I have done. As a crowning specimen of heraldic depravity, I place before the reader the most deep-laid and designing *double-entendre* that ever shocked the susceptibility of an unfortunate tuft-hunter. The family name of the Lords Henniker is Henniker-Major. Their motto is *Deus* MAJOR *columnus*, and not satisfied with this, over their crest is inscribed with shameless effrontery, and with total disregard of the aspirate, the audacious apothegm, *Tou aristeuein* ENEKA! Such atrocity requires no comment. It surpasses in duplicity the motto of the rich tobacconist who, on the advice of a wolf in sheep's clothing calling himself a friend, adopted as an inscription for the panels of his newly set up carriage, the appropriate but double-barrelled sentence, *Quid rides*. Punning in Latin is bad enough in all conscience; but there is one offence that evinces a greater amount of moral turpitude—a lower depth of mental degradation—and that is, punning in Greek! The police ought to interfere in such cases. I close Debrett with a sigh, and agree with Sam Slick that the mottoes of our nobility, as recorded in the Peerage-book, are decidedly 'quaint.'

DECLINED WITH THANKS.

THIS is the courteous phrase in which the impossible contributor is addressed by the universal editor, with the cool malignity, perhaps, in addition, of the editor's compliments; and it is like receiving your rich uncle's affectionate blessing as his last bequest, instead of something you had expected in the 3 per cents.

From the outside of the editorial letter, generally, nothing can be gathered except Hope, which builds her nest in the very loopholes of the direction, and in the official wafer whereon the name of the awful journal is inscribed. But sometimes the communication takes the form of a big parcel, with the indelicacy of 'Not approved' outside, so that the very postman sees it; and you know at once that it is your epic in twelve cantos, or your transcendental essay upon the Origin of Evil, come back to the talented author, with 'Two shillings, if you please, for overweight.' Or these immortal efforts never come back at all, from which circumstance you suppose them to be accepted, and take in the judicious periodical for three months running, whereas no expectation can have less grounds upon which to stand even on tiptoe. When you have written, at last, to know at what date to expect these lights to appear, and receive no reply, you request, in a great rage, that they may be returned immediately; whereupon you are informed by a neat lithograph, that the Megatherium Magazine is never answerable for its rejected manuscripts. Or, again, no lithograph comes; upon which you presently call at the sacred office, and a little boy standing upon his head behind the counter, reverses that position to inform you that he 'don't know nothink about no papers,' and then instantly re-performs his favourite feat. Nay, suppose—for we may suppose anything—that one of these deathless works is at length published—that you believe yourself to have laid the foundations of a colossal fortune as well as a posthumous reputation—and that, above all, you have made your friends believe so, too—how very distressing it is to be informed, and not without some little importunity, that 'the circumstances of the Megatherium are such as to preclude any pecuniary compensation to its esteemed contributor.'

My favourite nephew, aged seventeen, being thwarted in his choice of a profession, which had fallen upon that of his beloved father, who keeps foxhounds, fixed for himself, in the second place, upon literature, which he knew to be pursued by his gifted uncle, myself; and this was the dexterous way in which I threw him off *that* scent: I brought him into my study, and shewed him my largest desk, which has been to him, I know, from early youth an object of mysterious awe and reverence. 'My son,' said I—adopting the style of *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*, the *Arabian Nights*, and Mr W. M. Thackeray, which I find to be as good as any for domestic didactics—'would'st thou learn how steep and slippery is the road to fame, read here: Thou seest before thee more than one hundred manuscripts, written with pain, research, and application, upon as many different subjects. This, where the lines run evenly, two and two, beginning at the same place and ending in a similar monosyllable, is poetry, the language of the gods; this, where the words are often underlined or italicised, in order to shew where the point lies more perspicuously, is, of course, a humorous article; and this again, where the writing is interspersed with capital letters—such as Beauty, True, Undying, Ideal, Human, and the like—of course is a branch of metaphysics, at once the most useful and the most entertaining of sciences. Essays, sermons, statistics, novels, poems, and tragedies, I have tried my hand at all of them, and not, in my opinion, without credit.'

'I see,' cried the impetuous youth—'I see,' while his heart beat high with a noble emulation; 'and why should not I do the same as you, nunkey?'

'Listen!' said I solemnly. 'When I was your age, I had already written as much again as you see here. At eight years old, I composed a heroic poem upon the subject of Hengist and Horsa, our early conquerors; at nine, an essay upon their respective characters; at ten, a tragedy, terminating in their deaths. I did not fetter myself pusillanimously with the actual facts, but caused the royal brothers to expire at an eating-match for the sovereignty, in the presence of their assembled nobles. *These three works are still in manuscript*—unsung, unpublished, and unacted. During the above period, I answered the ornithological conundrum of the Cottage Beehive, in hopes of obtaining its premium of a thousand copies, which, however, was "awarded to our clever young correspondent B." It was awarded, my son; but whether it was ever *given* to B. or not to B.—as the poet says—or whether B. existed, that is a question.

'I composed also more acrostics for the Conservative journal of my native county than you would easily imagine, and transferred them—upon rejection by that malignant print—to the Radical organ, which infidel and revolutionary paper refused them likewise. I have, I flatter myself, at various times, written under the protection of every letter in the alphabet; but "D. A. M." was invariably reminded that blasphemy was not wit; or "K. I. S.," that there was a point where gaiety degenerated into indecency. Nor was I more fortunate in my more ambitious aliases. "Quill Pen" was always told to mend himself; "Juvenis," to buy a spelling-book; and "Paterfamilias"—for in despair I tried that once—to stick to his home-affairs, and leave off writing rubbish. The idol of my heart was still, however, the periodical press; and I rose from beneath the wheels of its Juggernaut-car a wilder devotee than ever. The hopeless passion of appearing in print was born with me, I believe, just as much as our family name of Waggles; and it is not more likely to depart, than for the Queen, unsought, to grant me her letters-patent to assume the arms and title of Montmorenci. My genius, my enthusiasm, upon every subject was ready laid—as the housemaids say—and only required the lucifer-match of sympathy, applied by my dear mother, to cause it to burst forth into manuscript. She considered—bless her loving soul!—my Hengist and Horsa to be upon a level with any of the historical plays of Shakspeare; while your respected grandfather, whose tracts, as you remember to have heard, have had a European, and even an African reputation, and who disinherited your papa for keeping hounds, insisted that there was not enough of the religious element in either author. His connection with the Weekly Scourge for Sinners, was not of the smallest use in introducing me into that periodical, an amusing little sketch which I had sent for consideration being returned by the editor with a marginal request, written in red ink, that I should take care of my precious soul.

'You have heard it often remarked in your domestic circle that Uncle Waggles has written for the *Times* for many years, and you perhaps have reverenced him accordingly: be sure that it is for your good, then, that I now confess to you that the effect of these epistles—except in their secret influence upon the mind of the editor—has not been great, nor certainly of a general nature. Whenever a grievance has been detected, at home or abroad, or the least excuse has offered itself for addressing the leading journal, I was always indeed the first as well as the last in the field of correspondents; *but the letters were none of them ever published*. The Family Hodge Podge, yonder, was the fiftieth journal in which my soul has yearned to expand itself without success; and upon my failure there, I determined to leave all serial literature to its receipts and recipes for ever. Since then, however, and alas! I have been as constant a contributor—a rejected contributor, that is—to everything as I was before: I found myself, the very next day, composing a tale called the Screw, the Lever, and the Plummet-rule, which I afterwards sent to the Freemason's Intelligencer, sealed with a pair of compasses, and signed—I regret to acknowledge—"Brother Smith."

'This disease of *cacoëthes scribendi*, my son, is as hard to combat as dram-drinking or—which I am afraid will be a familiar image—cigar-smoking: avoid it while you may. I forgot to say that oftentimes my sorrow for these many disappointments poured itself forth in song; but I have not wooed the muse with any greater success than the young person, whoever she may be, who presides over unrhythmical compositions. Here are fifty lines from a little lyric—if you'd like to read them—entitled "Never," sent a month ago to the Weekly Coronal, and, need I say, rejected. The time is gone by for poetry in this country, as it is for nervous prose.

'Now, my dear nephew, what do you think of literature as a profession, a livelihood? Quite right and sensible. Go, tell your father that you will be a bishop instead. I'm sorry to turn you out of the study; but when I have finished this passage for *Punch*, I have got to scribble off a little entertaining something for the *Ecclesiologist*.'

PHOTOGRAPH OF A NEGRO TOWN.

Having casually expressed a desire, or rather intention, to go over the town—Malagueah in Western Africa—it appeared to have been communicated to the king, and I very soon had a man in attendance, who announced himself as my deputed guide. He was one of the king's messengers, who, probably, had been selected for the office on account of his presumed proficiency in the English language; an acquirement which greatly enhanced his general merits in his own estimation, as well as in mine; and this, with an expression of great good-humour in his countenance, was a tolerable set-off to rather unprepossessing features, of which a prodigious large mouth was the most conspicuous, with, what is rather uncommon among Africans, very irregular coarse teeth: but here, again, nature or habit had counterbalanced the defect, by making that capacious organ the most indefatigable exponent of its owner's self-sufficiency. His costume comprised simply four articles—a long blue shirt, with the usual amplitude of sleeves; a pair of thick-soled native slippers; a small, black, close-fitting cap; and, of course, a *gree-gree* suspended round his neck. He manifested some impatience to be doing the honours of his office; and that I might judge of his paces beforehand, or gain some idea of his general energy, he continued taking rapid strides backwards and forwards in front of the piazza; stopping suddenly at intervals, and casting an inquiring look at my movements, whilst I remained writing off the immediate current of my thoughts at the table, which had been removed from the inner chamber for my accommodation. In truth, just then, I had no very vehement desire to go forth. The piazza was unusually free from loungers, and, happily, the two or three it contained were taciturn; an agreeable coolness prevailed under the projecting roof, and with it a soft subdued light, quite different from the broad hot glare of the mid-day sun outside, in which my expectant cicerone was taking his exercise.

But my impatient attendant at once settled the matter by coming to a full stop, taking a dead aim at me with his 'English,' and letting off an appeal to my sympathies which there was no resisting.

'Come, come, ole man!' exclaimed he, 'you go? See town, eh? Fine town, fine walk—berry fine, eh, yes!' and I at once yielded to the half remonstrance, half command, and put aside my papers.

Passing from the yard through the *lodge*, I was going to call it—but the *zadingy*, the native designation, would be better—we proceeded to the right, between walls on either side, which defined the width of the streets at about ten feet, their height being about seven feet, covered at the top with dry palm-leaves and long grass overlapping, to counteract the influence of the sun's rays upon the consolidated mixture of mud and clay of which they were composed, and which presented a yellowish-brown surface, embellished here and there with some fissures and cracks. These street-walls ramify the whole town, extending to the outer wall which surrounds it. At every thirty feet, or thereabout, we come to a lodge or zadingy, like the one I had just left; and this leads into a yard or enclosure containing a certain number of houses, that may be regarded as a small walled parish of the town. One zadingy occasionally serves for an entrance to two separate enclosures, by having two doorways in the inner wall. At a few of the open spaces which occasionally occur, where one street runs into another in an oblique direction, I observed a circle in the centre, of large rude stones—not, as with us, for the protection of the pietons, but consecrated to extempore prayer. It was very evident that general convenience had dictated the direction of the streets, rather than any regard to regularity, the necessary points of communication with the several separate establishments being the chief object. It seemed pretty evident, during my subsequent intercourse with the people, that a prescriptive right existed among them, maintained by mutual good-will and the simplicity of their habits, to pass and repass, without concern, through one another's premises, whenever occasion called for it. This, however, may be considered a prevalent custom among most African tribes, and, indeed, among most primitive peoples.

Notwithstanding the prevailing sameness in the formation of the yards and the structure of the dwellings, they presented distinctive features, and a general attention to order and cleanliness calculated to arrest and gratify the attention of a stranger. In some instances, the houses were rather larger than the majority, thatched and finished with greater nicety, the raised terraces of the piazzas smoother on the surface and sharper at their angles, and many of them were decorated with ornamental borders and quaint figures, somewhat of the Egyptian character, generally worked in the mud composition when in a plastic state, and then coloured red or white. The interior of the houses was remarkable only for simplicity; even the domiciles of the chiefs, which presented no higher distinction than an assortment of firearms and other weapons ranged against the walls. In some dwellings, likewise, the rudely constructed chests common to all were in greater number and larger bulk. The contents of these chests were, probably, a scanty wardrobe, with a hoard of precious knickknacks—*gree grees* that had lost their virtue, or whose virtue combined afforded greater security than a Bramah-lock; probably, also—most probably—a few pieces of European cloths, some heads of American tobacco, and perhaps a copy of, or, more likely, some extracts from the Koran. In some instances, a few mats of superior quality were spread upon the floor, or upon a dais within a niche which occasionally appeared in the wall, or a platform projecting from it, forming a quadrangular space of about six feet by four, for sleeping.

The dwellings were always round, resembling stunted towers, with a beam placed horizontally across the top of the wall supporting an upright pole. Rough branches of trees rise from the wall to near the top of this pole; and being placed close together, and covered with layers of dried grass, constituting the thatch, they give the building the form of a tent; but occasionally, and more especially in the houses occupied exclusively by the women and children, several extra beams are placed across, on which coarse mats are spread for the reception of store rice or corn; and in the vicinity of these dwellings, the large wooden mortars for cleaning rice, wooden bowls, calabashes, mats, and baskets, with other simple household articles, are commonly to be seen, together with some fowls picking up their living, and giving the place a look of home.

The rafters are simply rough limbs of trees, and the flooring of earth. Wooden flooring would at once become the refuge and nursery of the vermin which so invariably abound within the tropics wherever Europeans locate themselves; while the ruder habitations of the natives are comparatively, if not wholly, free from them. The raised terraces upon which the dwellings of which I am now speaking stand, and the hard compact texture of the composition, serve still further to ward off this nuisance, although the roofs are subject to the inroads of rats, which frequently find a secure retreat within the thick thatch.

In passing through some of these houses, I found the cool uniform temperature within them particularly striking; and for a moment it even produced an acute sense of chilliness. The air being admitted only through two opposite doors, a constant draught is kept up; and it may be questioned whether, with all our science and ingenuity, we could better succeed in accomplishing the object, or in constructing habitations more suitable to the climate and the exigencies of the people; whilst the luxuriant growth of fruit-trees in their vicinity dispenses here and there an agreeable shade, and gives a peculiar charm to their general aspect. One circumstance, however, struck me as militating in some degree against the promotion of coolness, and this was the close proximity of most of the houses in the yards; but within the tropics, it is *shade* rather than coolness which the native tribes most covet.

A town so laid out and constructed as the one I have thus attempted to describe, and which may be taken as a specimen of the larger towns generally in these regions, presents, if not actual security from aggression, at least serious obstacles to a successful assault by native enemies. With the points of ingress through the outer walls barricaded, the fire of musketry, with which the people are pretty familiar, opens upon the assailants through small apertures; and small loopholes are also pierced at short intervals in the walls themselves. Suppose an entrance to be effected, however, the invaders find every wall in the town, and every zadingy, pierced in a similar manner, and every separate yard a citadel in itself. Malagueah is rather a large town, and the number of such 'citadels' is consequently considerable. Although the zadingies have no gates, and the dwelling-houses no doors, these are scarcely needed, since, with forests close at hand, there is a ready supply of rough timber for barricades. I was much struck with the paucity of inhabitants visible, and these consisting chiefly of women and children. Some of the yards appeared wholly deserted, and others with only a few valetudinarians collected in the piazza of one house; the bulk of the male population being absent at their 'farms'—a designation given to every patch of ground appropriated to culture—or following whatever other avocations necessity or inclination had dictated. Collectively, however, the population was estimated at about 3000.

For these particulars, I am indebted to my own observation; but still I could have done little without my guide. Nor am I less indebted to him as master of the ceremonies betwixt the 'lion' he was leading and its interested beholders, than for his laudable efforts in pacifying the screaming infants, and the more lively apprehensions of the elder class of youngsters, who scampered off in all directions on my approach, and were to be seen here and there peering from some nook and corner to which they had retreated. My indefatigable conductor seemed to have computed the precise number of 'yards' within the town, and the portion of time that required to be allotted to each of them, on the assumption that I was to visit them all; so that by the time I had seated myself in a piazza, and shaken hands with the men, and he had beckoned to and joked with the women, and then discharged a voluble description of my characteristics and habits, his peroration was ended with a spring upon his feet and a transition from *soo-soo* to English in reiterating, on every occasion: 'Come, *ole man!* you come—fine yard, eh?—fine house—fine woman, eh?—berry fine!—yes!' and away he then went with prodigious strides, his loose slippers clattering like castanets, and his long loose sleeves provoked into a mighty perturbation by the action of his arms. He was a character to amuse for a time, till the time came for putting him under some restraint; and that time arrived when we had reached the extremity of the town where the outer walls run parallel with the river. Conscious, perhaps, that, as a 'government officer,' he was fulfilling his instructions by shewing me only *over* the town, it was evidently not his intention to shew me *out* of it; and so I became the leader in turn, and, passing through the public zadingy, we at once entered upon the high-road, which runs parallel with the walls, and, to the right, leads to the town of Mellicourie, at the head of the river, about fourteen miles distant. Unlike the ordinary beaten tracks which come under the name of roads in Africa, this was about forty feet wide, perfectly straight and level, and carpeted with grass as far as the eye could reach. It was flanked on either side by luxuriant forest timber. 'Fine road,' exclaimed my companion; 'berry fine, eh?—os—os road—os *here*,' pointing to the spot where we stood—'os *dere*,' waving his hand towards the distance in the vista—'os *back—ras—os-ras*—berry fine, berry—eh?—yes!' by which I acquired a vague notion, afterwards confirmed, that it was the race-course. I could not resist walking about a mile in the cool shade of this beautiful avenue, contemplating the several varieties of fine timber, and the wild luxuriance of the underwood; the treading upon the soft greensward, and the breathing of a pure-tempered atmosphere, affording a grateful contrast after traversing the uneven streets in the open glare of the sun and the reflected heat from the walls and sandy soil. In returning, we still kept on the outskirts of the town at a right angle with the road, and leading towards another entrance, having the forest still on one side of us; and here my companion certainly brought me completely at fault as he directed my attention to what he termed *berry-bush* in his usual strain of commendation—'*Fine* berry-bush—you see—*berry* fine, eh?—yes!' Presently, however, I discovered, in a more open situation between the stems of the trees, several small hillocks identical in form with our common graves; and which at once conveyed to me the fact, that this portion of the forest was the '*bury*-bush,' or *bury*ing-ground. On taking a more extensive survey of this region of death, I could not discover the slightest distinction in these mementoes of mortality, or any sign by which one might be identified from another. One and all alike, they collectively proclaimed to the living that 'underground precedency is a jest,' and the Greek epitaph, slightly paraphrased, might serve for each of them:

> My name—my country—what are they to thee?
> What, whether base or proud my pedigree;
> Perchance I far surpassed all other men;
> Suppose I fell beneath them all—what then?
> Suffice it, stranger, that thou see'st a grave,
> Thou know'st its use; it holds—perchance a SLAVE!

Perhaps, after all, I might have acquired the needful information, or have fully satisfied my curiosity by sauntering leisurely through the town *without a guide.* I might, with perfect nonchalance, have entered the private enclosures, popped my head into this house or that, till I had established a preference in my own mind, or until some sable damsel, perhaps, had established that preference for me. I might have jumped into the first or best hammock that presented itself, called for light for my cigar, palm-wine, jelly-coco-nuts, or whatever fruits might be courting my wayward fancy from some neighbouring trees—frightened all the children out of their wits—played tricks with the women—tried the temper or temperament of the men —'pitched into' my guide for calling me 'old man'—invaded the sanctuary of the mosques—and, finally, have subscribed my initials or my name upon the walls, in order to assist tradition in commemorating the visit of an 'Englishman' to the place. But I contemplated none of these things, and did none of them. The maxim, 'when at Rome, do as Rome does,' is not limited in its application to the eternal city; the proud boast of an Englishman, that 'his house is his castle,' simply enunciates a principle of constitutional liberty of which he is happily participant; but that boast becomes at once a reproach upon him who, whether Englishman or not, cannot reconcile patriotism with a regard to the rights of others, and who heedlessly, not to say lawlessly, invades the domicile of the unoffending 'savage.'

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE BIVOUAC OF THE GUERRILLA.

I STAYED to hear no more, but drove the spur against the ribs of my horse, till he sprang in full gallop along the road. Eager as were my men to follow, 'twas as much as they could do to keep up.

We no longer thought of scouts or cautious marching. The trappers had mounted, and were galloping with the rest. We thought only of *time.*

We rode for the hacienda de Vargas, straight up the river. Although it was beyond the rancheria, we could reach it without passing through the latter—which lay some distance back from the stream. We could return to the village afterwards, but first for the hacienda. There I wished to arrive in the shortest time possible. The miles flew behind us, like the dust of the road.

Oh, should we not be in time! I feared to calculate the length of the interval since the boy had heard that rabble rout. Was it more than an hour? Five miles to the rancho, and he on foot. Had he travelled rapidly? Yes, here and there; but he had made a stop: some men had passed him, and he had hidden in the bushes till they were out of sight. He had been more than an hour on the way—nearly two, and one would be enough for the execution of the darkest deed. Oh, we should not arrive in time!

There was no delay now. We were going at top-speed, and in silence, scarcely exchanging a word. Alone might be heard the clattering of hoofs, the chinking of bits, or the ringing of steel scabbards.

Neither the slimy gutter nor the deep rut of *carreta* wheels stayed our advance; our horses leaped over, or went sweltering through them.

In five minutes we came to the *rinconada*, where the road forked—the left branch leading to the village. We saw no one, and kept on by the right, the direct road to the hacienda. Another mile, and we should reach the house; a quarter of that distance, and we should come in sight of it; the trees alone hindered our view of its walls. On—on!

What means that light? Is the sun rising in the west? Is the chapparal on fire? Whence comes the yellow gleam, half intercepted by the trunks of the trees? It is not the moon!

'Ho! the hacienda is in flames!'

'No—it cannot be? A house of stonè, with scarcely enough timber to make a blaze! It cannot be that?

It is not that. We emerge from the forest; the hacienda is before our eyes. Its white walls gleam under a yellow light—the light of fire, but not of a conflagration. The house stands intact. A huge bonfire burns in front of the portal; it was this that caused the glare through the forest.

We draw up, and gaze upon it with surprise. We behold a huge pile—the material supplied from the household stack of dry fagots—a vast blaze drowning the pale moonshine. We can see the hacienda, and all around it, as distinctly as by the light of day!

For what purpose this holocaust of crackling acacias?

Around the fire we behold many forms, living and moving. There are men, women, dogs, and saddled horses. Huge joints are roasting over the red coals, and others, roasted, are being greedily eaten. Are they savages who surround that blazing pile? No—we can see their faces with full distinctness, the white skins and black beards of the men, the cotton garments of the women; we can see sombreros and serapés, cloth cloaks and calzoneros of velveteen, sashes and sabres; we can distinguish their voices as they shout, sing, and carouse; we note their lascivious movements in the national dance—the *fandango*. No Indians they! 'Tis a bivouac of the guerrilleros—the ruffians for whom we are in search.

O that I had listened to the voice of prudence, and adopted the strategy of a surround! But my blood was boiling, and I feared to lose even a moment of time, lest we might be too late. But one or two of my followers counselled delay, and, as the event proved, they were the wisest. The rest, like myself, were impatient for action.

The word was given; and like hounds, fresh loosed from the leash, we rushed forward with charging cheer.

It was the madness of fools. Well knew our enemy the hoarse Texan 'hurrah!' It had been shouted to terrify them, when there was no need. They would never have stood ground.

The shout warned them, causing them to scatter like a herd of deer. The steep hill proved too heavy for our horses; and before we could reach its summit, the main body of the guerrilla had mounted and scampered off into the darkness. Six of them fell to our shots, and as many more, with their she-associates, remained prisoners in our hands; but as usual that subtle coward had contrived to escape. Pursuit was idle; they had taken to the dark woods beyond the hill.

I thought not of pursuit; my mind was bent on a far different purpose.

I rode into the *patio*. The court was lit up by the glare of the fire. It presented a picture of ruin. Rich furniture was scattered about in the verandah and over the pavement, broken or tumbled down. I called her name—the name of Don Ramon. Loudly and earnestly did I raise my voice, but echo gave the only reply.

I dismounted, and rushed into the verandah, still vociferating, and still without receiving a response. I hurried from room to room—from *cuarto* to *sala*—from sala to *saguan*—up to the azotea—everywhere—even to the *capilla* in the rear. The moonbeams gleamed upon the altar, but no human form was there. The whole house was deserted; the domestics—even the women of the cocina—had disappeared. My horse and I seemed the only living things within those walls—for my followers had remained outside with their prisoners.

A sudden hope gleamed across my heart. Perhaps they had taken my counsel, and gone off before the mob appeared? Heaven grant it might be so!

I rushed out to question the captives. They should know, both men and women: they could certainly tell me.

A glance shewed me I was too late to receive information from the men. A large *pecan* tree stood at one corner of the building. The firelight glared upon it; from its branches hung six human forms with drooping heads, and feet far from the earth. They had just ceased to live!

One told me that the herredero was among them, and also the cruel matador. Pedro had identified both. The others were *pelados* of the town, who had borne part in the affair of the day. Their judges had made quick work, and equally quick had been the ceremony of execution. Lazos had been reeved over the limbs of the pecan, and with these all six had been jerked up without shrift or prayer!

It was not revenge for which I panted. I turned to the women; many of these had made off, but there were still a dozen or more in the hands of the men. They looked haggard with drink; some sullen, and some terrified. They had reason to be afraid.

In answer to my questions, they shook their heads, but gave me no information. Some remained doggedly silent; others denied all knowledge of Don Ramon or his daughter. Threats had no effect. They either knew not, or *feared to tell* what had befallen them. O heaven! could it be the latter?

I was turning away angered and despairing, when my eyes fell upon a figure that seemed to skulk under the shadow of the walls. A shout of joy escaped me as I recognised the boy Cyprio; he was just emerging from his place of concealment.

'Cyprio?' I cried.

'*Si señor's*,' answered he, advancing rapidly to where I stood.

'Tell me, Cyprio! where are they gone—where—where?'

'*Carrai señor's!* these bad men have carried the *dueño* away; I do not know whither.'

'The señora? the señora?'

'Oh! *cavallero! es una cosa espantosa!*' (It is a terrible thing.)

'Quick, tell me all! Quickly, Cyprio!'

'Señor's, there came men with black masks, who broke into the house and carried off the master; then they dragged out Doña Isolina into the patio! *Ay de mi!* I cannot tell you what they did before—*pobre señorita!* There was blood running down her neck and all over her breast: she was not dressed, and I could see it. Some went to the caballeriza, and led out the white horse—the steed that was brought from the *llanos*. Upon his back they bound Doña Isolina. *Valga me dios!* such a sight!'

'Go on!'

'Then, señor's, they led the horse across the river, and out to the plain beyond. All went along, to see the sport, as they said—*ay de mi!* such sport! I did not go, for they beat and threatened to kill me; but I saw all from the hill-top, where I had hidden myself in the bushes. *O Santissima Maria!*'

'Go on!'

'Then, señor's, they stuck *cohetes* in the hips of the horse, and set them on fire, and pulled off the bridle, and the steed went off, with fire-rockets after him, and Doña Isolina tied down upon his back—*pobre señorita!* I could see the horse till he was far, far away upon the *llano*, and then I could see him no more. *Dios de mi alma! la niña esta perdida!*' (Alas! the young lady is lost.)

'Some water! Rube! Garey! friends—water! water!'——

I made an attempt to reach the fountain in the patio; but, after staggering dizzily a pace or two, my strength failed me, and I fell fainting to the earth.

CHAPTER LVII.

TAKING THE TRAIL.

I had merely swooned. My nerves and frame were still weak from the blood-letting I had received in the combat of yesterday. The shock of the horrid news was too much for my powers of endurance.

I was insensible only for a short while; the cold water revived me.

When consciousness returned, I was by the fountain, my back leaning against its parapet edge; Rube, Garey, and others were around me. From my dripping garments, I perceived that they had *douched* me, and one was pouring a fiery spirit down my throat. There were men on horseback, who had ridden into the patio—the iron hoofs causing the court to ring. They were rangers, but not those who had left camp in my company. Some had arrived since, and others were still galloping up. Those girls had reached the ranger camp, and told their tale. The men had not waited for orders, or even for one another, but rushing to their horses, took the road in twos and threes. Every moment, a horseman, or several together, came riding forward in hot haste, carrying their rifles, as if ready for action, and uttering loud cries of indignation.

Wheatley had arrived among the foremost. Poor fellow! his habitual buoyancy had departed; the gay smile was gone from his lips. His eyes were on fire, and his teeth set in the stern expression of heart-consuming vengeance.

Amidst the hoarse shouting of the men, I heard screaming in the shriller voices of women. It came from without.

I rose hastily, and ran towards the spot: I saw several of the wretched captives stripped to the waist, and men in the act of flogging them, with mule-quirts and pieces of raw-hide rope.

I had feared it was worse; I had feared that their captors were inflicting upon them a *retaliation in kind.* But no—angry as were my followers, they had not proceeded to such a fiendish extremity.

It required all the authority of a command to put an end to the distressing spectacle. They desisted at length, and the screeching and affrighted wretches were permitted to take themselves away—all disappearing rapidly beyond the light of the fire.

At this crisis, a shout was raised: 'To the rancheria, to the rancheria!' and instantly a party, with Wheatley and Holingsworth at its head, rode off for the village. Pedro went along with them.

I waited not for their return; I had formed a plan of action for myself, that would admit of no delay in its execution.

At first, stunned by the blow, and the distraction of my swooning senses, I had not been able to *think;* as soon as the confusion passed, and I could reflect more clearly, the course I ought to pursue was at once apparent. Vengeance I had felt as the first impulse, and a strong desire to follow up the fiend Ijurra—night and day to follow him—though the pursuit should lead me into the heart of the hostile ground.

This was but a momentary impulse: vengeance must be stifled for the time. A path was to be taken that widely diverged from that of the retreating guerrilla—*the trail of the white steed.*

Mounting Cyprio, and choosing from my band half-a-dozen of the best *trackers*, was the work of a moment. In another, we were in the saddle; and descending the hill, we plunged rapidly through the stream, crossed the skirting timber, and soon reached the open prairie.

Under Cyprio's guidance, we found the spot desecrated by that cruel display. The ground was trampled by many hoofs; fragments of paper—powder-blackened—broken rocket-sticks, and half-burnt fuses, strewed the sward—the pyrotechnic *reliquiæ* of the fiendish spectacle.

We halted not there. By the aid of our guide and the moonlight, we rode clear of the confusion; and taking up the trail of the horse, struck off upon it, and were soon far out upon the prairie.

For more than a mile we advanced at a gallop. Time was everything. Trusting to the intelligence of the Mexican boy, we scarcely scrutinised the track, but made directly for the point where the horse had been last seen.

Cyprio's information did not deceive us. A *motte* of timber had served him as a mark: the steed had passed close to its edge. Beyond it, he had seen him no more.

Beyond it, we found the tracks, easily recognisable by Rube, Garey, and myself. There was a peculiarity by which we were prevented from mistaking them: three of the prints were clearly cut in the turf—almost perfect circles—the curve of the fourth—of the off fore-foot—was interrupted by a slight indentation, where a piece had been broken from the hoof. It had been done in that terrible leap upon the rocky bed of the barranca.

Taking the trail again, we kept on—now advancing at a slower pace, and with a greater degree of caution. Late rains had moistened the prairie-turf, and we could perceive the tracks without dismounting. At intervals, there were stretches of drier surface, where the hoof had scarcely left its impression. In such places, one leaped from the saddle, and led the way on foot. Rube or Garey usually performed this office; and so rapidly did they move along the trail, that our horses were seldom in a walk. With bodies half bent, and eyes gliding along the ground, they pressed forward like hounds running by the scent, but, unlike these, the trackers made no noise. Not a word was spoken by any one. I had no list for speech; my agony was too intense for utterance.

With Cyprio I had conversed upon the harrowing theme, and that only at starting. From him I had gathered further details. No doubt, the matador had performed his office. O God! without ears!

Cyprio had seen blood; it was streaming adown her neck and over her bosom: her slight garments were stained red with it. He knew not whence it came, or why she was bleeding. He was not present when that blood had been drawn; it was in her chamber, he thought. She was bleeding when the ruffians dragged her forth!

Belike, too, the herredero had done his work? Cyprio had seen the blacksmith, but not the *fierro.* He heard they had branded some at the plazza, among others the daughter of the alcaldé—*pobre Conchita!* He did not see them brand the Doña Isolina.

The ruffian deed might have been accomplished for all that; there was plenty of time, while the boy lay hid.

How was she placed upon the horse?

Despite my heart's bitterness, as I put these interrogatories, I could not help thinking of the Cossack legend. The famed classic picture came vividly before my mind. Wide was the distance between the Ukraine and the Rio Bravo. Had the monsters who re-enacted this scene on the banks of the Mexican river—had these ever heard of Mazeppa? Possibly their leader had; but still more probable that the fiendish thought was original.

The fashion at least was. Cyprio had seen and could describe it.

She was laid longitudinally upon the back of the steed, her head resting upon the point of his shoulder. Her face was downward, her cheek touching the withers. Her arms embraced the neck, and her wrists were made fast under the animal's throat. Her body was held in position by means of a belt around her waist, attached to a surcingle on the horse—both tightly buckled. In addition to this, her ankles, bound together by a thong, were fastened to the croup, with her feet projecting beyond the hips!

I groaned as I listened to the details.

The ligature was perfect—cruelly complete. There was no hope that such fastenings would give way. Those thongs of raw-hide would not come undone. Horse and rider could never part from that unwilling embrace—never, till hunger, thirst, death—no, not even death could part them! O horror!

Not without groans could I contemplate the hideous fate of my betrothed—of her whose love had become my life.

I left the tracking to my comrades, and my horse to follow after. I rode with loose rein, and head drooping forward; I scarcely gave thought to design. My heart was well-nigh broken.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE VOYAGEUR.

We had not gone far when some one closed up beside me, and muttered a word of cheer; I recognised the friendly voice of the big trapper.

'Don't be afeerd, capt'n,' said he, in a tone of encouragement; 'don't be afeerd! Rube an me'll find 'em afore thar's any harm done. I don't b'lieve the white hoss 'll gallip fur, knowin thar's someb'dy on his back. It war them gim-cracks that sot him off. When they burn out, he'll come to a dead halt, an then'——

'And then?' I inquired mechanically.

'We'll get up, an your black'll be able to overhaul him in a jump or two.'

I began to feel hope. It was but a momentary gleam, and died out in the next instant.

'If the moon 'ud only hold out,' continued Garey, with an emphasis denoting doubt.

'Rot the moon!' said a voice interrupting him; 'she's a gwine to guv out. Wagh!'

It was Rube who had uttered the unpleasant prognostication, in a peevish, but confident tone.

All eyes were turned upward. The moon, round and white, was sailing through a cloudless sky, and almost in the zenith. How, then, was she to 'give out?' She was near the full, and could not set before morning. What did Rube mean? The question was put to him.

'Look ee 'ander!' said he in reply. 'D'ees see thet ur black line, down low on the paraira?'

There appeared a dark streak along the horizon to the eastward. Yes, we saw it.

'Wal,' continued Rube, 'thur's no timber thur—ne'er a stick—nor high groun neyther: thet ur's a cloud; I've seed the likes afore. Wait a bit. Wagh! In jest ten minnits, the durned thing'll kiver up the moon, an make thet putty blue sky look as black as the hide o' an Afrikin niggur—*it* will.'

'I'm afeerd he's right, capt'n,' said Garey, in a desponding tone. 'I war doubtful o' it myself: the sky looked too *near*. I didn't like it a bit: thar's always a change when things are better'n common.'

I needed not to inquire the consequences, should Rube's prediction prove correct; that was evident to all of us. The moon once obscured by clouds, our progress would be arrested: even a horse could not be tracked in the darkness.

We were not long in suspense. Again the foresight of the old trapper proved unerring. Cumuli rolled up the sky one after another, until their black masses shrouded the moon. At first, they came only in detached clouds, and there was light at intervals; but these were only the advanced columns of a heavier body, that soon appeared, and without a break, spread itself pall-like over the firmament.

The moon's disc became entirely hidden from our view; her scattered beams died out, and the prairie lay dark as if shadowed by an eclipse.

We could follow the trail no farther. The ground itself was not visible, much less the hoof-prints we had been tracing; and halting simultaneously, we drew our horses together, and sat in our saddles to deliberate upon what was best to be done.

The consultation was a short one. They who formed that little party were all men of prairie or backwoods experience, and well versed in the ways of the wilderness. It took them but little time to decide what course should be followed; and they were unanimous in their opinion. Should the sky continue clouded, we must give up the pursuit till morning, or adopt the only alternative—follow the trail by *torch-light*.

Of course the latter was determined upon. It was yet early in the night; many hours must intervene before we should have the light of day. I could not live through those long hours without action. Even though our progress might be slow, the knowledge that we were advancing would help to stifle the painfulness of reflection.

'A torch! a torch!'

Where was such a thing to be procured? We had with us no material with which to make one; there was no timber near! We were in the middle of a naked prairie. The universal mezquite—the *algar obia glandulosa*—excellent for such a purpose, grew nowhere in the neighbourhood. Who was to find the torch? Even Rube's ingenuity could not make one out of nothing.

'Ecoutez, mon capitaine!' cried Le Blanc, an old voyageur—'écoutez! vy me no ride back, et von lanterne bring from ze ville Mexicaine?'

True, why not? We were yet but a few miles from the rancheria. The Canadian's idea was a good one.

'Je connais,' he continued—'know I, pe gar! ze ver spot où—vere—sont cachées—hid les chandelles magnifiques—von, deux, tree big candles—vax, vax'——

'Wax-candles?'

'Oui—oui, messieurs! tres grand comme un bâton; ze ver chose pour allumer la prairie.'

'You know where they are? You could find them, Le Blanc?'

'Oui, messieurs—je connais: les chandelles sont cachées dans l'église—zey are in ze church hid.'

'Ha! in the church?'

'Oui, messieurs; c'est un grand sacrilège, mon Dieu! ver bad; mais n'importe cela. Eef mon capitaine permis, vill allow pour aller Monsieur Quack'bosh, he go chez moi; nous chercherons; ve bring ze chandelles—pe gar ve bring him!'

From the mixed gibberish of the voyageur, I could gather his meaning well enough. He knew of a depository of wax-candles, and the church of the rancheria was the place in which they were kept. I was not in a frame of mind to care much for the sacrilege, and my companions were still less scrupulous. The act was determined upon, and Le Blanc and

Quackenboss, without more delay, took the back-track for the village.

The rest of us dismounted, and picketing our horses to the grass, lay down to await the return of the messengers.

CHAPTER LIX.

TRAILING BY TORCH-LIGHT.

While thus inactive, my mind yielded itself up to the contemplation of painful probabilities. Horrid spectacles passed before my imagination. I saw the white horse galloping over the plain, pursued by wolves, and shadowed by black vultures. To escape these hungry pursuers, I saw him dash into the thick chapparal, there to encounter the red panther or the fierce prowling bear—there to encounter the sharp thorns of the acacias, the barbed spines of the cactus, and the recurving claw-like armature of the wild aloes. I could see the red blood streaming adown his white flanks—not *his* blood, but that of the helpless victim stretched prostrate along his back. I could see the lacerated limbs—the ankles chafed and swollen—the garments torn to shreds—the drooping head—the long loose hair tossed and trailing to the earth—the white wan lips—the woe-bespeaking eyes—— Oh! I could bear my reflections no longer. I sprang to my feet, and paced the prairie with the aimless unsteady step of a madman.

Again the kind-hearted trapper approached, and renewed his efforts to console me.

'We could follow the trail,' he said, 'by torch or candle light, almost as fast as we could travel; we should be many miles along it before morning; maybe before then we should get sight of the steed. It would not be hard to surround and capture him; now that he was half-tamed, he might not run from us; if he did, he could be overtaken. Once in view, we would not lose sight of him again. The saynyora would be safe enough; there was nothing to hurt her; the wolves would not know the "fix" she was in, neyther the "bars" nor "painters." We should be sure to come up with her before the next night, and would find her first rate; a little tired and hungry, no doubt, but nothing to hurt. We should relieve her, and rest would set all right again.'

Notwithstanding the rude phrase in which these consolatory remarks were made, I appreciated the kind intent.

Garey's speech had the effect of rendering me more hopeful; and in calmer mood, I awaited the return of Quackenboss and the Canadian.

These did not linger. Two hours had been allowed them to perform their errand; but long before the expiration of that period, we heard the double trampling of their horses as they came galloping across the plain.

In a few minutes they rode up, and we could see in the hands of Le Blanc three whitish objects, that in length and thickness resembled stout walking-canes. We recognised *les chandelles magnifiques.*

They were the property of the church, designed, no doubt, to have illumined the altar upon the occasion of some grand *dia de fiesta.*

'Voilà! mon capitaine!' cried the Canadian, as he rode forward—'voilà les chandelles! Ah, mon Dieu! c'est von big sacrilège, et je suis bon Chrétien—buen Catolico, as do call 'im ze dam Mexicaine; bien—ze bon Dieu we forgive—God ve pardon vill pour—for ze grand necessitie; sure certaine he vill me pardon—Lige et moi—ze brave Monsieur Quack'bosh.'

The messengers had brought news from the village. Some rough proceedings had taken place since our departure. Men had been punished; fresh victims had been found under the guidance of Pedro and others of the abused. The trees in the church enclosure that night bore horrid fruit.

The alcaldé was not dead; and Don Ramon, it was supposed, still survived, but had been carried off a prisoner by the guerrilla! The rangers were yet at the rancheria; many had been desirous of returning with Le Blanc and Quackenboss, but I had sent orders to the lieutenants to take all back to camp as soon as their affair was over. The fewer of the troop that should be absent, the less likelihood of our being missed, and those I had with me I deemed enough for my purpose. Whether successful or not, we should soon return to camp. It would then be time to devise some scheme for capturing the leader and prime actor in this terrible tragedy.

Hardly waiting to hear the story, we lighted the great candles, and moved once more along the trail.

Fortunately, the breeze was but slight, and only served to make the huge waxen torches flare more freely. By their brilliant blaze, we were enabled to take up the tracks, quite as rapidly as by the moonlight. At this point, the horse had been still going at full gallop; and his course, as it ran in a direct line, rendered it more easy to be followed.

Dark as the night was, we soon perceived we were heading for a point well known to all of us—the prairie mound; and, under a faint belief that the steed might have there come to a stop, we pressed forward with a sort of hopeful anticipation.

After an hour's tracking, the white cliffs loomed within the circle of our view, the shining selenite glancing back the light of our tapers, like a wall set with diamonds.

We approached with caution, still keeping on the trail, but also keenly scrutinising the ground in advance of us—in hopes of perceiving the object of our search. Neither by the cliff, nor in the gloom around, was living form to be traced.

Sure enough the steed had halted there, or, at all events, ceased from his wild gallop. He had approached the mound in a walk, as the tracks testified; but how, and in what direction had he gone thence? His hoof-prints no longer appeared. He had passed over the shingle, that covered the plain to a distance of many yards from the base of the cliff, and no track could be found beyond.

Several times we went around the mesa, carrying our candles everywhere. We saw skeletons of men and horses with skulls detached, fragments of dresses, and pieces of broken armour—souvenirs of our late skirmish—we looked into our little fortress, and gazed upon the rock that had sheltered us; we glanced up the gorge where we had climbed, and beheld the rope by which we had descended still hanging in its place: all these we saw, but no further traces of the steed!

Round and round we went, back and forward, over the stony shingle, and along its outer edge, but still without coming upon the tracks. Whither could the horse have gone?

Perhaps, with a better light, we might have found the trail; but for a long hour we searched, without striking upon any sign of it. Perhaps we might still have found it, even with our waxen torches, but for an incident that not only interrupted our search, but filled us with fresh apprehension, and almost stifled our hopes of success.

The interruption did not come unexpected. The clouds had for some time given ample warning. The big solitary drops that at intervals fell with plashing noise upon the rocks, were but the *avant-couriers* of one of the great rain-storms of the prairie, when water descends as if from a shower-bath. We knew from the signs that such a storm was nigh; and while casting around to recover the trail, it commenced in all its fury.

Almost in an instant our lights were extinguished, and our bootless search brought to a termination.

We drew up under the rocks, and stood side by side in sullen silence. Even the elements seemed against me. In my heart's bitterness, I cursed them.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Looking on the surface of things, it might be thought there was nothing but politics to talk about—how the elections went, and so forth. However, science and art have not ceased to advance as an undercurrent: mathematicians have made further discoveries in their favourite science, and sent the results to the Royal Society in papers very learned, and very abstruse. Chemists have not been idle, as will erelong be demonstrated. Among them, Dr Marcet is realising experiments which Gulliver the veracious once saw at Laputa; he, the doctor, being engaged in an elaborate investigation of the nature and properties of fæcal matters, and not without important consequences. Some part of his researches has appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and now he has carried the inquiry further, and exhibits beautifully formed crystals of a new substance, to which he gives the name *excretine*.—Dr Herapath is studying the optical character of certain alkaloids, quinidin and cinchonidin, as chemists call them, and has obtained some singularly interesting results, which come in with the manifold phenomena of light.—Mr Faraday's views on the *Conservation of Force*, as mentioned in our last, have already met a rejoinder from a partisan of the old doctrine; hence, we may hope erelong to see these views presented in a popular form.—And when we add that Major-general Sabine is occupied with a voluminous work on terrestrial magnetism, which is to embody everything at present known on that interesting subject, it will be seen that science has not abated her thoughtful labours while the nation has been speaking out its mind on political affairs.—The science of magnetism has suffered a loss by the death of Dr Scoresby. He was devoted to it, and we hear that his decease was hastened by over-exertion in his late voyage to Australia, which resulted in confirming his theory for correcting the compass on board iron ships in both hemispheres.

We mentioned not long ago Professor William Thomson's theory for signaling rapidly by telegraph, by means of what he calls 'condensed pulses,' to be reduced to practice some day on the Atlantic telegraph. So far, everything promises well for success: the United States Congress have approved the measures for laying down the cable; and the government will lend two of their most powerful steamers to assist in the work. Our Admiralty will also lend two; and the project is, that the four shall meet about the middle of the Atlantic, when, two of them being laden with the halves of the cable, the wires will be united, and the vessels, steering in opposite directions, will pay out cable till the shore on either side is reached. The other two steamers are to keep near at hand to render assistance in case of need.—Meanwhile, Mr C. V. Walker has discovered an ingenious method of signaling on a railway—in other words, of enabling the guards of a disabled train to ask for help from the nearest stations in either direction. It has been for some time in use on the South-eastern Railway—one of the most efficient telegraph lines in the kingdom—and answers its purpose so well, that we see no reason why it should not be generally adopted. To describe it in few words, we must premise that by a peculiar arrangement of the battery apparatus, Mr Walker keeps the 'line-wire' in what he calls a null condition. Suppose, then, that a train breaks down. The guard, who carries with him a slender iron rod, hooks one end of it to the null-wire, and with the other touches one of the rails; whereupon, seeing that magnetic currents are constantly passing along the rails, a shock or impulse is at once transmitted from the rail, through the rod, and along the line-wire to the stations. Each touch becomes a signal; and by a simple code combining six touches, the nature of the assistance required may be indicated, for, as is easy to imagine, such a method involves no spelling out of words on a dial-plate. Here, then, is a great desideratum accomplished; simple, and yet effectual. Its importance is recognised by an account of it having been read at a meeting of the Royal Society, as may be seen in the *Proceedings* of that learned body.

Apropos of the Society: we promised to report progress concerning them. They are now removed to their new and commodious quarters in Burlington House, where, for the benefit of science, the Linnæan and Chemical Societies are to lodge under the same roof. The apartments which the Society have occupied in Somerset House since 1780, will now, we believe, be converted into government offices; and so the memorable associations that haunt therein, will be disturbed by the intrusion of bustling clerks, with tape, desks, and easy-chairs.

Mr Palliser's project for an exploration of parts of the Hudson's Bay Company's territory lying beyond the Red River Settlement and the Saskatchewan, is approved by government, and some of the party are already on the way to the scene of their labours. Among them there will be a botanist, mineralogist, and geologist; so that we shall get trustworthy information concerning the natural resources of the country, as well as its topography and capabilities. Some three or four years ago, we mentioned a report published by the Geographical Society on the region in question, in which its general features were described—a fertile land, rivers and lakes teeming with fish, and picturesque withal. When the present expedition shall have accomplished its task, we shall doubtless hear of a brisk immigration from Canada West and the adjacent States. Among the instruments with which the explorers will be supplied, are those necessary for taking magnetic observations—the phenomena being, as is well known, of especial interest in the higher latitudes. Seeing that the instruments were verified at the Kew Observatory, and that a committee of the Royal Society gave counsel as to the scientific objects of the expedition, the best results may be hoped for.

Yet another is to be added to the list of travellers who have perished while exploring the interior of Africa, if the news be true that Dr Vogel was assassinated after leaving Kuka with the hope and intention of reaching the Nile. As will be remembered, he went out three years ago accompanied by two sappers, to join Dr Barth. The latter has returned in safety; and we trust that the rumour of his follower's death will turn out to be unfounded.—The Leichardt exploring-party are still missing in Australia, and late accounts from the colonies mention a searching expedition as likely to be set on foot.

Another example of what can be done with coloured bricks and good workmanship towards improving street-architecture, may now be seen in Fetter Lane—a site by no means favourable. It is a four-story building, intended for a printing-office; and with its harmonious colours, arched windows, ornamental cornice and chimneys, proves to demonstration that a place of business need not be ugly. The streets of London are so eminently capable of improvement in this particular, that we gladly notice a favourable fact.—We hear from time to time of Model Lodging-houses opened in provincial towns—as recently at Ipswich—implying an advance in social arrangements, yet, from some cause, these houses in London do not flourish. Either the rents are too high, or there is too much of going up and down stairs, or the regulations are such as not to leave sufficient freedom to the ordinary class of tenants. The latter is probably the most powerful cause. We heard recently of an eminent manufacturing firm in Suffolk who built comfortable rooms as lodgings for the single men in their employment. No objection was made to the amount of rent, or to the accommodation; there was everything that an artisan could require for comfort and self-respect, and yet the rooms were left untenanted. 'The men,' said one of the firm, 'prefer a pigsty with liberty, to decent quarters with regulations. And liberty has a wide meaning—from leave to be dirty, to license to tipple.'

The Institute of British Architects have submitted the name of Mr Owen Jones to the Queen, as one worthy the award of the Royal medal; and they purpose giving their 'Soane Medallion' and 'Medal of Merit' for the two best designs for a metropolitan hotel. They announce, moreover, as subjects for future prizes: 'The application of wrought iron to structural purposes'—'The influence of local materials on English architecture;' and they promise a tangible honour 'for the best design in not less than five drawings, for—a marine sanitarium, or building for the temporary residence of a limited number of convalescents belonging to the middle and upper classes of society.' The Institute do not confine themselves to the merely useful, as Mr Papworth's paper lately read before them, 'On Beauty in Architecture and its Alliance with the Past,' abundantly testifies.

Certain agricultural chemists in France have discovered that pounded glass is profitable in cultivation of the land; and M. Paul Thénard is making experiments on a great scale with the pulverised slag of blast-furnaces. This slag he believes to be equivalent to feldspathic rock, and eminently attackable by the agents present in the soil and atmosphere; for the constituents are silicates, anhydrous potash, and iron. He has set up the necessary machinery for pulverising the stubborn lumps, and promises to publish his results as soon as they are justified by practice. Should they confirm the results obtained on a smaller scale, what an opening there will be for a new branch of industry, in the preparation of a fertiliser from heaps of refuse, at present regarded as a nuisance; and what profit Staffordshire will make out of its hideous mountains of waste!

Schoenbein, pursuing his experiments on ozone, finds certain facts, apparently unimportant in themselves, but not so in their relations to chemical science. He shews that an alcoholic solution of two kinds of mushrooms—*Boletus luridus* and *Agaricus sanguineus*—colourless in itself, turns blue under the influence of ozone; and that the expressed juice of these same mushrooms contains an organic matter capable of transforming oxygen into ozone.—A series of test-experiments for ozone, made last year at Birmingham, confirm the conclusions arrived at in other towns in England and on the continent. 'When the wind blew from the country,' says the observer, 'a fair, or probably a full quantity of ozone was indicated; but when the current of air had passed over the town, or came from the colliery district, there was no indication of it, excepting in high winds, when traces of it were noticed.'—Professor Rogers of Boston, United States, from a similar course of experiments, inclines to believe that the presence of ozone is dependent on certain winds. During easterly or southerly winds, for example, he found ozone to be nearly or quite undiscoverable, but abundant on a change to the west or north-west. As there is much greater contrast in respect of dryness and moisture among the winds of the United States than of this country, it is not improbable that, from a long course of observations, something like a law may be arrived at for this remarkable atmospheric constituent.

The nursery established in Algeria by the French government, at the instance of the Société d'Acclimation, prospers with some of its productions. Three plants of caoutchouc (*Ficus elastica*) brought from Coromandel twelve years ago, are now 'nearly ten mètres high, and eighty centimètres in circumference at one mètre from the ground, and the branches extending horizontally cover a great space.' These trees were tapped in 1855, in order that specimens of Algerine caoutchouc might appear in the Paris Exhibition. The *Croton sebiferum*, from China, is also successful, having begun to yield fruit, and the sugar-sorgho. This latter plant, says M. Hardy, the director, 'secretes on the surface of its stalks, at full maturity, a white resinous powder, from which candles could be made. A hectare of sorgho gives more than a hundred kilogrammes of this substance.' As yet, the attempts made to acclimatise wax and tallow-bearing plants, the gutta-percha and Peruvian bark, have failed.

There is a project for starting a manufactory of perfumes in Algeria, originating in M. Millon's ingenious researches. In a description of his process, we are told that, 'to avoid the alterations which flowers undergo on drying or distillation, he separates the aromatic part by dissolving it in a very volatile liquid, which is afterwards expelled by distillation. With such a solvent, the distillation is attended by no inconvenience, for it may be performed at a low temperature.' The best solvents are ether and sulphuret of carbon. 'Properly managed, there is very little loss of the solvent, and the distillation is rapidly performed, much more rapidly, and with a larger quantity of leaves and flowers, than by the ordinary method. But the gathering of the flowers should be done at the proper time of day for each flower. Thus, the carnation gives off its perfume after an exposure of two or three hours to the sun. Roses, on the contrary, should be gathered in the morning as soon as well open; the jasmine before sunrise.' By this process the perfume becomes isolated, and may be kept exposed to the air for years without alteration. The project becomes important by the side of the fact, that the annual value of the perfumes exported from France is 30,000,000 francs.

Last year, in consequence of accidents arising out of the use of brine in food, the Council of Health of Paris were charged to inquire into the subject. We reproduce a passage from their report: 'The use of brine as a condiment or seasoning in the nutriment of man has hitherto had no injurious effect, and nothing authorises the opinion that an economical process so advantageous for the poor should be proscribed. The same is not true of the abuse which is made of this substance in the nourishment and in the treatment of the diseases of certain animals, especially swine and horses. Authentic facts and recent experiments shew that the mixture of brine in considerable quantity with food may produce real poisoning. In all cases, brine preserved too long or in contact with rancid meat should not be employed except with the greatest care, and after it has been purified by skimming off all the scum which forms on the surface.'

By way of conclusion—Mr Tooke has published the last volume of his *History of Prices*. Having now exceeded the age of fourscore, he leaves the continuation of the interesting subject to younger hands. Three striking points come out on perusal of the book, which, in brief, are, that in Mr Tooke's opinion, the rate of interest will not for a long time, if at all, be lower than at present; that the price of provisions will rise rather than fall; and that a great financial crash is imminent in France.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

The Amazons in New York have commenced this year's campaign by petitioning the legislature for women's rights. The petition is referred to the judiciary committee, of which it is supposed Judge Fort will be the chairman. Last session, this judge gave the following report on the same question: 'The petitioners ask that there may be established by law an equality of rights between the two sexes. The judiciary committee is composed of married and single gentlemen. The bachelors on the committee, with becoming diffidence, have left the subject pretty much to the married gentlemen. These have considered it with the aid of the light they have before them, and the experience married life has given them. Thus aided, they are enabled to state that ladies have the best piece and choicest titbit at table, the warmest place in winter, and the coolest place in summer. They have their choice on which side of the bed they will lie, front or back. A lady's dress costs three times as much as that of a gentleman; and at the present time, with the prevailing fashion, one lady occupies three times as much space in the world as a gentleman. It has thus appeared to the married gentlemen of your committee, being a majority—the bachelors being silent for the reasons mentioned, and also, probably, for the further reason that they are still suitors for the favours of the gentler sex—that if there is any inequality or oppression in the case, the gentlemen are the sufferers. They, however, have presented no petition for redress, having doubtless made up their minds to yield to an inevitable destiny. On the whole, the committee have concluded to recommend no measure, except that, as they have observed several instances in which husband and wife have both signed the same petition—in such case they would recommend the parties to apply for a law authorising them to change dresses, so that the husband may wear the petticoats, and the wife the breeches, and thus indicate to their neighbours and the public the true relation in which they stand to each other.'

FISHING IN CHINA.

It has been supposed that nearly a tenth of the population derive their means of support from fisheries. Hundreds and thousands of boats crowd the whole coast of China—sometimes acting in communities, sometimes independent and isolated. There is no species of craft by which a fish can be inveigled which is not practised with success in China—every variety of net, from vast seines embracing miles, to the smallest hand-*filet* in the care of a child. Fishing by night, and fishing by day—fishing in moonlight, by torchlight, and in utter darkness—fishing in boats of all sizes—fishing by those who are stationary on the rock by the sea-side, and by those who are absent for weeks on the wildest of seas—fishing by cormorants—fishing by divers—fishing with lines, with baskets, by every imaginable decoy and device. There is no river which is not staked to assist the fisherman in his craft. There is no lake, no pond, which is not crowded with fish. A piece of water is nearly as valuable as a field of fertile land. At daybreak, every city is crowded with sellers of live fish, who carry their commodity in buckets of water, saving all they do not sell to be returned to the pond or kept for another day's service.—*Sir John Bowring in the Transactions of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Part V.*

IDENTITY OF DYAK AND EUROPEAN GAMES.

Games are practised among them, some of which astonished us by their similarity to those practised by the peasantry of Europe; particularly that of climbing up a large pole, previously greased to render the achievement difficult of performance, and to the top of which a piece of pork is attached. The meat is the reward of the person whose agility renders him the first to attain this eminence, and the frequent failures in the attempts call forth from the gazing crowds bursts of laughter as loud and long-continued as from those who gaze at the similar spectacle at an English country-fair. . . . . I observed the children playing at peg-top precisely as do those of England; but their tops had no iron pegs, and more resembled those which at school we used to call whipping-tops. I looked on the game with delight, and saw the spinning-top, the mark for the others, receive several smart blows; but they appeared to be of very hard wood, and though driven to some distance, were never broken.—*Low's Sarawak.*

DAY.

Night's shades are waning fast—approaching Dawn,
  A gray dim phantom, creeps along the sky,
With ashen lips, and face all blanched and wan,
  And silver-dusky eyes of vacancy,
And spectral form revealed mysteriously
  Down to her ghostly middle, and the rest
All lost in pearly mist, that floatingly
  Seems her gray garments trailing low on Earth's expansive breast.

With cold wan breath that dims the shivering stars,
  She parts the sable curtains of the night,
And the east portal of the sky unbars—
  And straight a shower of faintest purple light
Plays strangely round her brow of dusky white
  With mystic glimmer—and her wavering form
Wanes in dissolving radiance from the sight,
  As grow the herald tints of day more eloquent and warm.

Pale amber waves of light, in billowy floods,
  Surge grandly in upon the waking sky,
With soft faint green, like tint of April woods,
  And rich warm crimson, blent exquisitely—
Till misty hills blush with the brilliancy,
  And on their glowing tops stands laughing Day
With outspread wings, steeped in each gorgeous dye,
  And crown of radiant horny beams, that round his temples play.

Clad in his own bright loveliness he stands—
  Blue floating eyes look on the world below,
And burnished hair, loosed from its gleaming bands,
  Falls o'er his frame with undulating flow—
Red beamy lips, and cheeks of ruddy glow,
  Fresh flowery zone, and fair green-sandalled feet,
And fleecy robes that flutter to and fro
  In the pure healthful radiant gush of his own breathings sweet.

Laughing he stands, and floods of sunny light
  From each fair burning tress shakes down on earth,
And views with smiles his seraph-image bright
  That the sweet waking waters mirror forth—
Till Nature stirs, and with a smile of mirth
  Unveils her placid face, all fresh with dews,
And lifts her temples for that gift of worth,
  The crown of Light, flung sparkling down from those bright hands profuse!

E. H. C. D.

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A WOMAN'S THOUGHTS ABOUT WOMEN.

SOMETHING TO DO.

I PREMISE that these thoughts do not include *married* women, for whom there are always plenty to think, and who generally think quite enough of and for themselves: therefore let them be! They have cast their lot for good or ill, have realised in greater or less degree the natural vocation of our sex—woman joined to man. They must find out its comforts and its responsibilities, and e'en make the best of both. It is the single women, belonging to those supernumerary pale ranks, which, political economists tell us, are yearly increasing, who most need thinking about.

First, in their early estate, when they have so much in their possession—youth, bloom, and health giving them that temporary influence over the other sex which may result, and is meant to result, in a permanent one. Secondly, when this sovereignty is passing away, the chance of marriage lessening, or wholly ended, or voluntarily set aside, and the individual making up her mind to what, as respect for Grandfather Adam and Grandmother Eve must compel us to admit, is an unnatural condition of being.

Why this undue proportion of single women should almost always result from over-civilisation, and whether, since society's advance is usually indicated by the advance, morally and intellectually, of its women—this progress, by raising women's ideal standard of the 'holy estate,' will not necessarily cause a decline in the very *un*holy estate which it is most frequently made—are questions too wide to be entered upon here. I have only to deal with facts—with a certain acknowledged state of things, perhaps impossible of remedy, but by no means incapable of amelioration.

But, granted these facts, and leaving to wiser heads their cause and their cure, I, a woman, have a right to say my say—out of practical observation and experience. And looking around upon the middle-classes, which form the staple stock of the community, it appears to me that the chief canker at the root of women's lives is the want of something to do.

Herein I refer, as this chapter must be understood especially to refer, not to those whom ill or good fortune—query, is it not often the latter?—has forced to earn their bread; but to 'young ladies,' who have never been brought up to do anything. Tom, Dick, and Harry, their brothers, has each had it knocked into him from school-days that he is to do something, to be somebody. Counting-house, shop, or college, afford him a clear future on which to concentrate all his energies and aims. He has got the grand *pabulum* of the human soul—occupation. If any inherent want in his character, any unlucky combination of circumstances, nullify this, what a poor creature the man becomes!—what a dawdling, moping, sitting-over-the-fire, thumb-twiddling, lazy, ill-tempered animal! And why? 'Oh, poor fellow! 'tis because he has got nothing to do!'

Yet this is precisely the condition of women for a third, a half, often the whole of their existence.

That Providence ordained it so—made men to work, and women to be idle—is a doctrine that few will be bold enough to assert openly. Tacitly, they do, when they preach up lovely uselessness, fascinating frivolity, delicious helplessness—all those polite impertinences and poetical degradations to which the foolish, lazy, or selfish of our sex are prone to incline an ear, but which any woman of common sense must repudiate as insulting not only her womanhood, but its Creator.

Equally blasphemous, and perhaps even more harmful, is the outcry about 'the equality of the sexes;' the frantic attempt to force women—who, nine-tenths of them, are ignorant of and unequal for their own duties—into the position and duties of men. A pretty state of matters would ensue! Who that ever listened for two hours to the verbose confused inanities of a ladies' committee, would incontinently go and give his vote for a female House of Commons? or who, on the receipt of a lady's letter of business—I speak of the average—would wish thereupon to have our courts of justice stocked with matronly lawyers, and our colleges thronged by

> Sweet girl-graduates with their golden hair?

As for finance, in its various branches—if you pause to consider the extreme difficulty there always is in balancing Mrs Smith's housekeeping-book, or Miss Smith's quarterly allowance, I think, my dear Paternal Smith, you need not be much afraid lest this loud acclaim for 'women's rights' should ever be more than 'great cry and little wool.'

No; equality of the sexes is not in the nature of things. Man and woman were made for, and not like one another. One only 'right' we have to assert with the opposite sex—and that is as much in our own hands as theirs—the right of having something to do.

That both sexes were meant to labour—one 'by the sweat of his brow;' the other, 'in sorrow to bring forth'—and bring up—'children'—cannot, I fancy, be questioned. Nor, when the gradual changes of the civilised world, or some special destiny, chosen or compelled, have prevented that first, highest, and in earlier times almost universal lot, does this accidental fate in any way abrogate the necessity, moral, physical, and mental, for a woman to have occupation, in other forms.

But how few parents ever consider this? Tom, Dick, and Harry, aforesaid, leave school and plunge into life; 'the girls' likewise finish their education, come home, and stay at home. That is enough. Nobody thinks it needful to waste a care upon them. Bless them, pretty dears, how sweet they are! papa's nosegay of beauty to adorn his drawing-room. He delights to give them all they can desire—clothes, amusements, society; he and mamma together take every domestic care off their hands; they have abundance of time and nothing to occupy it; plenty of money, and little use for it; pleasure without end, but not one definite object of interest or employment; flattery and flummery enough, but no solid food whatever to satisfy mind or heart—if they happen to possess either—at the very emptiest and most craving season for both. They have literally nothing whatever to do, except to fall in love; which they accordingly do, the most of them, as fast as ever they can.

'Many think they are in love, when, in fact, they are only idle'—is one of the truest sayings of that great wise bore, Imlac, in *Rasselas*, and it has been proved by many a shipwrecked life, of girls especially. This 'falling in love,' being usually a mere delusion of the fancy, and not the real thing at all, the object is generally unattainable or unworthy. Papa is displeased, mamma somewhat shocked and scandalised; it is a 'foolish affair,' and no matrimonial results ensue. There only ensues—what?

A long dreary season, of pain real or imaginary, yet not the less real because it is imaginary, of anger and mortification, of impotent struggle—against unjust parents, the girl believes, or, if romantically inclined, against cruel destiny. Gradually this mood wears out; she learns to regard 'love' as folly, and turns her whole hope and aim to—matrimony! matrimony in the abstract; not *the* man, but any man—any person who will snatch her out of the dulness of her life, and give her something really to live for—in short, something to do.

Well, the man may come, or he may not. If the latter melancholy result occurs, the poor girl passes into her third stage of young-ladyhood, fritters or mopes away her existence, sullenly bears it, or dashes herself blindfold against its restrictions; is unhappy, and makes her family unhappy; perhaps herself cruelly conscious of all this, yet unable to find the true root of bitterness in her heart: not knowing exactly what she wants, yet aware of a morbid, perpetual want of something. What is it?

Alas! the boys only have had the benefit of that well-known juvenile apothegm, that

Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do:

it has never crossed the parents' minds that the rhyme could apply to the delicate digital extremities of the daughters.

And so their whole energies are devoted to the massacre of old Time. They prick him to death with crochet and embroidery needles; strum him deaf with piano and harp playing—*not* music; cut him up with morning-visitors, or leave his carcass in ten-minute parcels at every 'friend's' house they can think of. Finally, they dance him defunct at all sort of unnatural hours; and then, rejoicing in the excellent excuse, smother him in sleep for a third of the following day. Thus he dies, a slow, inoffensive, perfectly natural death; and they will never recognise his murder till, on the confines of this world, or from the unknown shores of the next, the question meets them: 'What have you done with Time?'—Time, the only mortal gift bestowed equally on every living soul, and, excepting the soul, the only mortal loss which is totally irretrievable.

Yet this great sin, this irredeemable loss, in many women, arises from their ignorance. Men are taught as a matter of business to recognise the value of time, to apportion and employ it: women, rarely or never. The most of them have no definite appreciation of the article as a tangible divisible commodity at all. They would laugh at a mantua-maker who cut up a dress-length into trimmings, and then expected to make out of two yards of silk a full skirt. Yet that the same laws of proportion should apply to time and its measurements—that you cannot dawdle away a whole forenoon, and then attempt to cram into the afternoon the entire business of the day—that every minute's unpunctuality constitutes a debt or a theft (lucky, indeed, if you yourself are the only party robbed or made creditor thereof!): these slight facts rarely seem to cross the feminine imagination.

It is not their fault; they have never been 'accustomed to business.' They hear that with men 'time is money;' but it never strikes them that the same commodity, equally theirs, is to them not money, perhaps, but *life*—life in its highest form and noblest uses—life bestowed upon every human being, distinctly and individually, without reference to any other being, and for which every one of us, married or unmarried, woman as well as man, will assuredly be held accountable before God.

My young-lady friends, of from seventeen upwards, your time, and the use of it, is as essential to you as to any fathers or brothers of you all. You are accountable for it just as much as they are. If you waste it, you waste not your substance, but your very souls—not that which is your own, but your Maker's.

Ay, there the core of the matter lies. From the hour that honest Adam and Eve were put into the garden, not—as I once heard some sensible preacher observe—'not to be idle in it, but to dress it and to keep it,' the Father of all has never put one man or one woman into this world without giving them something to do there, in it and for it: some visible, tangible work to be left behind them when they die.

Young ladies, 'tis worth a grave thought—what, if called away at eighteen, twenty, or thirty, the most of you would leave behind you when you die? Much embroidery, doubtless; various pleasant, kindly, illegible letters; a moderate store of good deeds; and a cart-load of good intentions. Nothing else—save your name on a tomb-stone, or lingering for a few more years in family or friendly memory. 'Poor dear ——! what a nice lively girl she was.' For any benefit accruing through you to your generation, you might as well never have lived at all.

But 'what am I to do with my life?' as once asked me one girl out of the numbers who begin to feel aware that, whether marrying or not, each possesses an individual life, to spend, to use, or to lose. And herein lies the momentous question.

The difference between man's vocation and woman's seems naturally to be this—one is abroad, the other at home: one external, the other internal: one active, the other passive. He has to go and seek out his path; hers usually lies close under her feet. Yet each is as distinct, as honourable, as difficult; and whatever custom may urge to the contrary—if the life is meant to be a worthy or a happy one—each must resolutely and undoubtedly be trod. But—*how*?

A definite answer to this question is simply impossible. So diverse are characters, tastes, capabilities, and circumstances, that to lay down an absolute line of occupation for any six women of one's own acquaintance, would be the merest absurdity.

'Herein the patient must minister to herself.' To few is the choice so easy, and the field of duty so unlimited, that she need puzzle very long over what she ought to do. Generally—and this is the best and safest guide—she will find her work lying very close at hand: some desultory tastes to condense into regular studies—some faulty household quietly to remodel—some child to teach, or parent to watch over; or, all these being needless or unattainable, to try and extend her service out of the home into the world, which perhaps never at any time so much needed the help of us women. And hardly one of its charities and duties can be done so thoroughly as by a wise and tender woman's hand.

Here occurs another of those plain rules which are the only guidance possible in the matter—a Bible rule, too—'*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.*' Question it not, philosophise not over it—do it!—only *do it!* Thoroughly and completely, never satisfied with less than perfectness. Be it ever so great or so small, from the founding of a village-school to the making of a collar—do it 'with thy might;' and never lay it aside till it is done.

Let each day's account leave this balance—of something done. Something beyond mere pleasure, one's own or others'—though both are good and sweet in their way. Let the superstructure of life be enjoyment, but let its foundation be in solid work—daily, regular, conscientious work: in its essence and results as distinct as any 'business' of men. What they expend for wealth and ambition, shall not we offer for duty and love—the love of our fellow-creatures, or, far higher, the love of God?

'Labour is worship,' says the proverb: also—nay, necessarily so—labour is happiness. Only let us turn from the dreary, colourless lives of the women, old and young, who have nothing to do, to those of their sisters who are always doing something—women who, believing and accepting the universal law, that pleasure is the mere accident of our being, and work its natural and most holy necessity, have set themselves steadily to seek out and fulfil theirs.

These are they who are little spoken of in the world at large. I do not include among them those whose labours should spring from an irresistible impulse, and become an absolute vocation, or it is not worth following at all—namely, the 'gifted' women, writers, painters, musicians, and the like. I mean those women who lead active, intelligent industrious lives: lives complete in themselves, and therefore not giving half the trouble to their friends that the idle and foolish virgins do—no, not even in love-affairs. If love comes to them accidentally, or rather providentially, and happily, so much the better!—they will not make the worse wives for having been busy maidens. But the 'tender passion' is not to them the one grand necessity that it is to aimless lives; they are in no haste to wed: they have got something to do; and if never married, still the habitual faculty of usefulness gives them in themselves and with others that obvious value, that fixed standing in society, which will for ever prevent their being drifted away, like most old maids, down the current of the new generation, even as dead May-flies down a stream.

They have made for themselves a place in the world: the harsh, practical, yet not ill-meaning world, where all find their level soon or late, and where a frivolous young maid, sunk into a helpless old one, can no more expect to keep her pristine position, than a last year's leaf to flutter upon a spring bough. But an old maid who deserves well of this same world, by her ceaseless work therein, having won her position, keeps it to the end.

Not an ill position either, or unkindly; often higher and more honourable than that of many a mother of ten sons. In households, where 'Auntie' is the universal referee, nurse, playmate, comforter, and counsellor: in society, where 'that nice Miss So-and-so,' though neither clever, handsome, nor young, is yet impossible to be omitted or overlooked: in charitable works, where she is 'such a practical body—always knows exactly what to do, and how to do it:' or perhaps, in her own house, solitary indeed, as every single woman's home must be, yet neither dull nor unhappy in itself, and the nucleus of cheerfulness and happiness to many another home besides.

She has not married. Under heaven, her home, her life, her lot, are all of her own making. Bitter or sweet they may have been—it is not ours to meddle with them, but we can any day see their results. Wide or narrow as her circle of influence appears, she has exercised her power to the uttermost, and for good. Whether great or small her talents, she has not let one of them rust for want of use. Whatever the current of her existence may have been, and in whatever circumstances it has placed her, she has voluntarily wasted no portion of it—not a year, not a month, not a day.

Published or unpublished, this woman's life is a goodly chronicle, the title-page of which you may read in her quiet countenance; her manner, settled, cheerful, and at ease; her unfailing interest in all things and all people. You will rarely find she thinks much about herself; she has never had time for it. And this her life-chronicle, which, out of its very fulness, has taught her that the more one does, the more one finds to do—she will never flourish in your face, or the face of Heaven, as something uncommonly virtuous and extraordinary. She knows that, after all, she has simply done what it was her duty to do.

But—and when her place is vacant on earth, this will be said of her assuredly, both here and Otherwhere—'*She hath done what she could.*'

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LX.—THE SOMBRERO.

THE horses cowered under the cold rain, all of them jaded and hungry. The hot dusty march of the morning, and the long rough gallop of the night, had exhausted their strength; and they stood with drooped heads and hanging ears, dozing and motionless.

The men, too, were wearied—some of them quite worn out. A few kept their feet, bridle in hand, under shelter of the impending cliff; the others, having staggered down, with their backs against the rock, had almost instantly fallen asleep.

For me was neither sleep nor rest; I did not even seek protection against the storm, but standing clear of the cliff, received the drenching shower full upon my shoulders. It was the chill rain of the 'norther;' but at that moment neither cold *norte* nor hot sirocco could have produced upon me an impression of pain. To physical suffering I was insensible. I should even have welcomed it, for I well understood the truth, proverbially expressed in that language, rich above all others in proverbial lore—'*un clavo saca otro clavo,*' and still more fully illustrated by the poet:

Tristezas me hacen triste,
Tristezas salgo a buscar,
A ver si con tristezas
Tristezas puedo olvidar.

Yes, under any other form, I should have welcomed physical pain as a neutraliser of my mental anguish; but that cold norther brought no consolation.

Sadly the reverse. It was the harbinger of keen apprehension; for not only had it interrupted our search, but should the heavy rain continue but for a few hours, we might be able neither to find or further to follow the trail. It would be *blinded*—obliterated—lost. Can you wonder that in my heart I execrated those black clouds, and that driving deluge?—that with my lips I cursed the sky and the storm, the moon and the stars, the red lightning and the rolling thunder?

My anathema ended, I stood in sullen silence leaning against the body of my brave horse, whose sides shivered under the chilly rain, though I felt not its chill.

Absorbed in gloomy thought, I recked not what was passing around me; and for an unnoted period I remained in this speechless abstraction.

My reverie was broken. Some expressions that reached my ear told me that at least two of my followers had not yet yielded to weariness or despair. Two of them were in conversation; and I easily recognised the voices of the trappers. Tireless, used to stern struggles—to constant warfare with the elements, with nature herself—these true men never thought of giving up, until the last effort of human ingenuity had failed. From their conversation, I gathered that they had not yet lost hope of finding the trail, but were meditating on some plan for recovering and following it.

With renewed eagerness I faced towards them and listened; both talked in a low voice. Garey was speaking, as I turned to them.

'I guess you're right, Rube. The hoss must a gone thar, an if so, we're boun' to fetch his tracks. Thar's mud, if I remember right, all roun' the pool. We can carry the candle under Dutch's sombrera.'

'Ye-es,' drawled Rube in reply; 'an ef this niggur don't miskalk'late, we ain't a gwine to need eyther cannel or sombrairay. Lookee yander!'—the speaker pointed to a break in the clouds—'I'll stake high, I kin mizyure this hyur shower wi' the tail o' a goat. Wagh! we'll hev the moon agin, clur as iver in the inside o' ten minnits—see ef we haint.'

'So much the better, old hoss; but hadn't we best first try for the tracks; time's precious, Rube'——

'In coorse it ur; git the cannel an the sombrairay, an le's be off then. The rest o' these fellurs hed better stay hyur; thu'll only bamfoozle us.'

'Lige!' called out Garey, addressing himself to Quackenboss—'Lige! gi' us yur hat a bit.'

A loud snore was the only reply. The ranger, seated with his back against the rock, and his head drooping over his breast, was sound asleep.

'Durned sleepyhead!' exclaimed Rube, in a tone of peevish impatience. 'Prod 'im wi' the point o' yur bowie, Bill! Rib-roast 'im wi' yur wipin-stick! Lam 'im wi' yur laryette!—gi' 'im a kick i' the guts!—roust 'im up, durn 'im!'

'Lige!—ho!—Dutchy!' cried Garey, approaching the sleeper, and shaking him by the shoulder; 'I want your sombrera.'

'Ho! wo! stand still! Jingo, he'll throw me. I can't get off; the spurs are locked. Ho! wo! wo!'

Rube and Garey broke into a loud cachinnation that awakened the rest of the slumberers. Quackenboss alone remained asleep, fighting in his dreams with the wild Indian horse.

'Durned mulehead!' cried Rube after a pause; 'let 'im go on at thet's long's he likes it. Chuck the hat off o' his head, Bill! we don't want *him*—thet we don't.'

There was a little pique in the trapper's tone. The breach that the ranger had made, while acting as a faithful sentinel, was not yet healed.

Garey made no further attempts to arouse the sleeper, but in obedience to the order of his comrade, lifted off the hat; and, having procured one of the great candles, he and Rube started off without saying another word, or giving any clue to their design.

Though joyed at what I had heard, I refrained from interrogating them. Some of my followers who put questions received only ambiguous answers. From the manner of the trappers, I saw that they wished to be left to themselves; and I could well trust them to the development of whatever design they had conceived.

On leaving us, they walked straight out from the cliff, but how far they continued in this direction it was impossible to tell. They had not lighted the candle; and after going half-a-dozen steps, their forms disappeared from our view amidst the darkness and thickly falling rain.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE TRAIL RECOVERED.

The rangers, after a moment of speculation as to the designs of the trappers, resumed their attitude of repose. Fatigued as they were, even the *cold* could not keep them awake.

After a pause, the voice of Quackenboss could be heard, in proof that that heavy sleeper was at length aroused; the rain falling upon his half-bald skull had been more effective than the shouts and shaking of Garey.

'Hillo! Where's my hat?' inquired he in a mystified tone, at the same time stirring himself, and groping about among the rocks. 'Where *is* my hat? Boys, did any o' ye see anything o' a hat, did ye?' His shouts again awoke the sleepers.

'What sort of a hat, Lige?' inquired one.

'A black hat—that Mexican sombrera.'

'Oh! a black hat; no—I saw no black hat.'

'You darned Dutchman! who do you expect could see a black hat such a night as this, or a white one eyther? Go to sleep!'

'Come, boys, I don't want none o' your nonsense: I want my hat. Who's got my hat?'

'Are you sure it was a black hat?'

'Bah! the wind has carried it away.'

'Pe gar! Monsieur Quack'bosh—votre chapeau grand—you great beeg 'at—est il perdu?—is loss?—c'est vrai? Pardieu! les loups—ze wolfs have it carr'd avay—have it mangé—eat? c'est vrai?'

'None o' your gibberish, Frenchy. Have *you* got my hat?'

'Moi! votre chapeau grand! No, monsieur. Quack'bosh—vraiment je ne l'ai pas; pe gar, no!'

'Have *you* got it, Stanfield?' asked the botanist, addressing himself to a Kentucky backwoodsman of that name.

'Dang yar hat! What shed I do wi' yar hat? I've got my own hat, and that's hat enough for me.'

'Have *you* my hat, Bill Black?'

'No,' was the prompt reply; 'I've got neery hat but my own, and that ain't black, I reckon, 'cept sich a night as this.'

'I tell you what, Lige, old fellow! you lost your hat while you were a ridin the mustang just now: the hoss kicked it off o' your head.'

A chorus of laughter followed this sally, in the midst of which Quackenboss could be heard apostrophising both his hat and his comrades in no very respectful terms. He continued to scramble over the ground in vain search after the lost sombrero, amidst the jokes and laughter, uttered at his expense.

To this merriment of my followers I gave but little heed: my thoughts were intent on other things. My eyes were fixed upon that bright spot in the sky, that had been pointed out by Rube; and my heart gladdened, as I perceived that it was every moment growing brighter and bigger. The rain still fell thick and fast; but the edge of the cloud-curtain was slowly rising above the eastern horizon, as though drawn up by some invisible hand. Should the movement continue, I felt confident that in a few minutes—as Rube had predicted—the sky would be clear again, and the moon shining brightly as ever. These were joyous anticipations.

At intervals I glanced towards the prairie, and I listened to catch some sound—either the voices of the trappers, or the tread of their returning footsteps. No such sounds could be heard.

I was becoming impatient, when I perceived a sudden waif of light far out upon the plain. It seemed to be again extinguished; but in the same place, and the moment after, appeared a small, steady flame, twinkling like a solitary star through the bluish mist of the rain. For a few seconds it remained fixed, and then commenced moving—as if carried low down along the surface of the ground.

There was nothing mysterious about this lone light. To Quackenboss only it remained an unexplained apparition; and he might have mistaken it for the *fata morgana*. The others had been awake when Rube and Garey took their departure, and easily recognised the lighted candle in the hands of the trappers.

For some time the light appeared to move backwards and forwards, turning at short distances, or as if borne in irregular circles, or in zigzag lines. We could perceive the sheen of water between us and the flame, as though there was a pond, or perhaps a portion of the prairie, flooded by the rain.

After a while the light became fixed, and a sharp exclamation was heard across the plain, which all of us recognised as being in the voice of the trapper Rube. Again the light was in motion—now flitting along more rapidly, and as if carried in a straight line across the prairie.

We followed it with eager eyes. We saw it was moving further and further away; and my companions hazarded the conjecture that the trappers had recovered the trail.

This was soon verified, by one of themselves—Garey—whose huge form, looming through the mist, was seen approaching the spot; and though the expression of his face could not be noted in the darkness, his bearing betokened that he brought cheerful tidings.

'Rube's struck the trail, capt'n,' said he in a quiet voice as he came up: 'yonder he goes, whar you see the bleeze o' the cannel! He'll soon be out o' sight, if we dont make haste, an follow.'

Without another word, we seized the reins, sprang once more into our saddles, and rode off after the twinkling star, that beaconed us across the plain.

Rube was soon overtaken, and we perceived that, despite the storm, he was rapidly progressing along the trail, his candle sheltered from the rain under the ample sombrero.

In answer to numerous queries, the old trapper vouchsafed only an occasional 'Wagh,' evidently proud of this new exhibition of his skill. With Garey, the curious succeeded better; and as we continued on, the latter explained to them how the trail had been recovered by his comrade—for to Rube, it appeared, was the credit due.

Rube remembered the mesa spring. It was the water in its branch that we had seen gleaming under the light. The thoughtful trapper conjectured, and rightly as it proved, that the steed would stop there to drink. He had passed along the stony shingle by the mound—simply because around the cliff lay his nearest way to the water—and had followed a dry ridge that led directly from the mesa to the spring-branch. Along this ridge, going gently at the time, his hoof had left no marks—at least none that could be distinguished by torch-light, and this was why the trail had been for the moment lost. Rube, however, remembered that around the spring there was a tract of soft, boggy ground; and he anticipated that in this the hoof-prints would leave a deep impression. To find them he needed only a 'kiver' for the candle, and the huge hat of Quackenboss offered the very thing. An umbrella would scarcely have been better for his purpose.

As the trappers had conjectured, they found the tracks in the muddy margin of the spring-branch. The steed had drunk at the pool; but immediately after had resumed his wild flight, going westward from the mound.

Why had he gone off at a gallop? Had he been alarmed by aught? Or had he taken fresh affright, at the strange rider upon his back?

I questioned Garey. I saw that he knew why. He needed pressing for the answer.

He gave it at length, but with evident reluctance.

'Thar are wolf-tracks on the trail!'

CHAPTER LXII.

WOLVES ON THE TRACK.

The wolves, then, were after him!

The trackers had made out their footprints in the mud of the arroyo. Both kinds had been there—the large brown wolf of Texas, and the small barking *coyote* of the plains—a full pack there had been, as the trappers could tell by the numerous tracks. That they were following the horse, the tracks also testified to these men of strange intelligence. How knew they this? By what sign?

To my inquiries, I obtained answer from Garey.

Above the spring-branch extended a shelving bank; up this the steed had bounded, after drinking at the pool. Up this, too, the wolves had sprung after: they had left the indentation of their claws in the soft loam.

How knew Garey that they were in pursuit of the horse?

The 'scratches' told him they were going at their fastest, and they would not have sprung so far had they not been pursuing some prey. There were footmarks of no other animal except theirs, and the hoof-prints of the steed; and that they were after him was evident to the trapper, because the tracks of the wolves *covered* those of the horse.

Garey had no more doubt of the correctness of his reasoning, than a geometrician of the truth of a theorem in Euclid.

I groaned in spirit as I was forced to adopt his conclusion. But it was all probable—too probable. Had the steed been alone—unembarrassed—free—it was not likely the wolves would have chased him thus. The wild-horse in his prime is rarely the object of their attack—though the old and infirm, the gravid mare, and the feeble colt, often fall before these hungry hunters of the plains. Both common wolf and coyote possess all the astuteness of the fox, and know, as if by instinct, the animal that is wounded to death. They will follow the stricken deer that has escaped from the hunter; but if it prove to be but slightly harmed, instinctively they abandon the chase.

Their instinct had told them that the steed was not ridden by a free hand; they had seen that there was *something amiss;* and in the hope of running down both horse and rider, they had followed with hungry howl.

Another fact lent probability to this painful conjecture: we knew that by the mesa were many wolves.

The spring was the constant resort of ruminant animals, deer and antelopes; the half-wild cattle of the *ganaderos* drank there, and the tottering calf oft became the prey of the coyote and his more powerful congener, the gaunt Texan wolf. There was still another reason why the place must of late have been the favourite prowl of these hideous brutes: the débris of our skirmish had furnished them with many a midnight banquet. They had ravened upon the blood of men and the flesh of horses, and they hungered for more.

That they might succeed in running down the steed, cumbered as he was, was probable enough. Sooner or later, they would overtake him. It might be after a long, long gallop over hill and dale, through swamp and chapparal; but still it was probable those tough, tireless pursuers would overtake him. They would launch themselves upon his flanks; they would seize upon his wearied limbs—upon hers the helpless victim on his back: both horse and rider would be dragged to the earth—both torn—parted in pieces—devoured!

I groaned under the horrid apprehension.

'Look thar!' said Garey, pointing to the ground, and holding his torch so as to illuminate the surface; 'the hoss has made a slip thar. See! hyar's the track o' the big wolf—he hes sprung up jest hyar; I can tell by the scratch o' his hind-claws.'

I examined the 'sign.' Even to my eyes it was readable, and just as Garey had interpreted it. There were other tracks of wolves on the damp soil, but one had certainly launched himself forward, in a long leap, as though in an effort to fasten himself upon the flanks of some animal. The hoof-mark plainly shewed that the steed had slipped as he sprang over the wet ground; and this had tempted the spring of the watchful pursuer.

We hurried on. Our excited feelings hindered us from pausing longer than a moment. Both rangers and trappers shared my eagerness, as well as my apprehensions. Fast as the torches could be carried, we hurried on.

Shortly after parting from the mesa, there occurred a change in our favour. The lights had been carried under hats to protect them from the rain. This precaution was no longer required. The storm had passed—the shower ceasing as suddenly as it had come on; the clouds were fast driving from the face of the firmament. In five minutes more, the moon would shine forth. Already her refracted rays lightened the prairie.

We did not stay for her full beam; time was too precious. Still trusting to the torches, we hurried on.

The beautiful queen of the night kept her promise. In five minutes, her cheering orb shot out beyond the margin of the dark pall that had hitherto shrouded it, and her white disc, as if purified by the storm, shone with unwonted brightness. The ground became conspicuous almost as in the day; the torches were extinguished, and we followed the trail more rapidly by the light of the moon.

Here, still in full gallop, had passed the wild-horse, and for miles beyond—still had he gone at utmost speed. Still close upon his heels had followed the ravenous and untiring wolves. Here and there were the prints of their clawed feet—the signs of their unflagging pursuit.

The roar of water sounded in our ears: it came from the direction in which the trail was conducting us; a stream was not far distant.

We soon diminished the distance. A glassy sheet glistened under the moonlight, and towards this the trail trended in a straight line.

It was a river—a cataract was near, down which the water, freshened by the late rain, came tumbling, broken by the rocks into hummocks of white foam. Under the moonlight, it appeared like an avalanche of snow. The trappers recognised an affluent of the Rio Bravo, running from the north—from the high steppe of the Llano Estacado.

We hurried forward to its bank, and opposite the frothing rapids. The trail conducted us to this point—to the very edge of the foaming water. It led no further. There were the hoof-marks forward to the brink, but not back. The horse had plunged into the torrent!

CHAPTER LXIII.

ACROSS THE TORRENT.

Surely was it so. Into that seething rapid the steed had launched himself—where the spume was whitest, and the rocks gave out their hoarsest echoes. The four hoof-prints, close together upon the bank, shewed the point from which he had sprung, and the deeply indented turf testified that he had made no timid leap. The pursuers had been close upon his heels, and he had flung himself with desperate plunge upon the water.

Had he succeeded in crossing? It was our first thought. It appeared improbable—impossible. Notwithstanding its foam-bedappled surface, the current was swift, and looked as though it would sweep either man or horse from his footing. Surely it was too deep to be forded. Though here and there rocks were seen above the surface, they were but the crests of large boulders, and between them the impetuous wave ran dark and deep. Had the horse lost footing? had he been forced to swim? If so, he must have been carried with the current—his body submerged—*his* withers sunk below the surface—his helpless rider——

The conclusion was evident to all of us. All felt the conviction simultaneously. No—not all. There came a word of comfort from the oldest and wisest—a word that gave cheer to my drooping spirit.

'Wagh! the hoss hain't swum a lick—*he* hain't.'

'Are you sure, Rube? How can you tell?' were the quick interrogatories.

'Sure—how kin I tell—i'deed, how,' replied Rube, a little nettled at our having questioned his judgment. 'What the divul's yur eyes good for—all o' yur? Lookee, hyur! and I'll shew ee how I tell. Do'ee see the colour o' thet water?—it ur as brown as a buffler in the Fall; thurfor its fresh kim down; and jest afore the shower, thur want more'n half o' it in the channel. *Then* the hoss mout a waded 'crosst hyur, easy as fallin off a log, and *then* the hoss *did* wade acrosst.'

'He crossed before the rain?'

'Sure as a shot from Targuts. Look at the tracks! Them wur made afore a drop o' rain kim down: ef they hednt, they'd a been a durned sight deeper in the sod. Wagh! the hoss got safe acrosst 'ithout wettin a hair o' his hips. So far as drowndin' goes, don't be skeeart 'bout thet, young fellur! the gurl's safe enough yit.'

'And the wolves? Do you think they have followed across the stream?'

'Ne'er a wolf o' 'em—ne'er a one. The vamints hed more sense. They knowd thur legs wan't long enough, an thet ur current wud a swep 'em a mile afore they kud a swum half-way acrosst. The wolves, they stayed on this side, I reck'n. Look hyur—hyur's thur tracks. Wagh! thur wur a wheen o' the filthy beests. Geehosophat! the bank ur paddled like a sheep-pen.'

We bent down to examine the ground. Sure enough, it was covered with the tracks of wolves. A numerous band had crowded together on the spot; and as the prints of their feet pointed in all directions, it was evident they had not gone forward, but brought to a stand by the torrent, had given up the chase, and scattered away.

Pray heaven it was no mere conjecture!

With Rube it was a belief; and as I had grown to put implicit reliance in the old trapper's wood-craft, I felt reassured. Rube's opinions, both as to the steed having safely crossed, and the discomfiture of the wolves, were shared by the rest of my followers—not one of whom was a mean authority on such a subject. Garey—second only to his older comrade in the working out of a prairie syllogism—gave Rube's statement his emphatic confirmation. The steed was yet safe—perhaps, too, the rider.

With lighter heart I sprang back into the saddle.

My followers imitated the example, and with eyes scanning the stream, we rode along the bank to seek for a crossing.

There was no ford near the spot. Perhaps where the steed had passed over the stream might have been waded at low-water; but now, during the freshet, the current would have swept off horse and man like so much cork-wood. The rocks—the black waves that rushed between them—the boiling, frothing eddies—discouraged any attempt at crossing there; we all saw that it was impracticable.

Some rode up stream, others went in the opposite direction.

Both parties met again with blank looks; neither had found a crossing.

There was no time to search further—at least my impatience would no longer brook delay. It was not the first time for both my horse and myself to cross a river without ford; nor was it the first time for many of my followers.

Below the rapids, the current ran slow, apparently ceasing. The water was still, though wider from bank to bank—a hundred yards or more. By the aid of the moonlight, I could tell that the bank on the opposite side was low and shelving. It could be easily climbed by a horse.

I stayed to reason no further. Many a hundred yards had Moro swum with his rider on his back—many a current had he cleft with his proud breast many times more rapid than that.

I headed him to the bank, gave him the spur, and went plunging into the flood.

Plunge—plunge—plunge! I heard behind my back till the last of my followers had launched themselves on the wave, and were swimming silently over.

One after another we reached the opposite side, and ascended the bank.

Hurriedly I counted our number as the men rode out; one had not yet arrived! Who was missing?

'Rube,' answered some one.

I glanced back, but without feeling any uneasiness. I had no fear for the trapper; Garey alleged he was 'safe to turn up.' Something had detained him. Could his old mare swim?

'Like a mink,' replied Garey; 'but Rube won't ride her across; he's affeerd to sink her too deep in the water. See! yonder he comes!'

Near the middle of the stream, two faces were observed rippling the wave, one directly in the wake of the other. The foremost was the grizzled front of the old mustang, the other the unmistakable physiognomy of her master. The moonlight shining upon both rendered them conspicuous above the dark brown water; and the spectacle drew a laugh from those who had reached the bank.

Rube's mode of crossing was unique, like every action of this singular man. Perhaps he adopted it from sheer eccentricity, or may be in order that his mustang might swim more freely.

He had ridden gently into the water, and kept his saddle till the mare was beyond her depth—then sliding backward over her hips, he took the tail in his teeth, and partly towed like a fish upon the hook, and partly striking to assist in the passage, he swam after. As soon as the mare again touched bottom, he drew himself up over the croup, and in this way regained his saddle.

Mare and man, as they climbed out on the bank—the thin skeleton bodies of both reduced to their slenderest dimensions by the soaking water—presented a spectacle so ludicrous as to elicit a fresh chorus of laughter from his comrades.

I stayed not till its echoes had died away; but pressing my steed along the bank, soon arrived at the rapids, where I expected to recover the trail. To my joy, hoof-marks were there, directly opposite the point where the steed had taken to the stream. He must have *waded* then.

Thank heaven! at least from that peril has she been saved!

POOR NUMBER TWO!

If the poor 'creaking wheel' cannot be mended, it is too hard to deny it at least the privilege of complaint. There is something sweet and soothing in knowing that our sufferings are regarded with sympathy and compassion. I consider myself a very hardly used person; but I think my grievances might be remedied if they were only properly made known in the proper quarter.

This society of ours, in England, is composed, locomotively speaking, of numbers 1, 2, and 3. We are ticketed off in business-like style, and sent, with more or less of ceremony, to our respective ends of the train. 'First class higher up, sir; please walk this way!' says an obsequious official, with smiling countenance. 'Second class lower down; *make* haste!' cries another. 'Third class in front, by the engine; get along, *will* ye!' shouts a third; and thus we get to our seats at last. Now, I cheerfully take my place in the class number two, and all I ask is that the railway companies should hold to their bargain, and treat me as that number.

It is proverbial that corporations have no consciences, and I am quite sure that no individual shareholder would have the barbarity, if it rested with his individual vote, to condemn me to sit all the way from London to Edinburgh on a hard board, when it is known how small a fraction the use of a cushion would subtract from the fare I have actually paid for my seat. I am reminded that in highly civilised England alone is this misery inflicted on second-class passengers. In Germany, Belgium, France, and Italy, to my certain knowledge, it is not so; and what I require, in all humility, is, *a reason* why English arrangements are so different. It is, to say the least, an ungracious, grinding, hard-hearted proceeding, to tell all the respectable middling classes of England, that if they cannot afford first-class fares, they shall pay for their deficiency in sore bones. As I have said, economy cannot be the object, for the cost of a little more comfortable accommodation would be absolutely infinitesimal. The plain design is to *force* as many persons as possible into the first-class carriages, by rendering the second-class as uncomfortable as may be. This argues a short-sighted as well as a selfish view of the matter, as I propose to shew. As long as one class is cheaper than another, it will always be found that a great many persons will prefer the temporary suffering entailed by inconvenient travelling, to the outlay of a larger sum. They do this because they must do it; and it is contemptible to punish them for a laudable spirit of economy. In another point of view, it is short-sighted. As long as the families of clergymen, country doctors, and middling gentry of all sorts, can travel only by submitting either to the too great cost of first-class, or the manifold inconveniences of second-class carriages, so long they will stay at home, except when compelled by necessity to do otherwise. I conceive that if the directors of railway companies are ignorant of this, they know very little of the true state of the case. I have said that they, as corporations, cannot be expected to have either conscience or humanity; and I therefore do not make an appeal to either quality. My object is to shew them that their present system is altogether a mistaken one as regards their dividends.

I speak from personal experience when I say, that their language to the public is: 'We make our own arrangements; you are not obliged by us to travel; and if you don't like what we offer you, you can stay at home.' This is the declaration of war held out by the companies, and it remains to be seen whether they have adopted the wiser course. I am not one of those who wish to travel at the expense of the shareholders: all I wish them to understand is this, that they get far less out of me in the long-run by taking up the tone they have assumed, than if they met me half-way in a conciliating spirit.

It is my private opinion, that as railways are entirely a parliamentary institution, parliament should superintend all the details of the system which it has created and forced upon the public, as well as the daily government-train. Failing this, it only remains that those who feel with me should endeavour to obtain a fair consideration of their claims. The object I have in view is not that fares should be lower than at present. I may think that it would pay better to lower them, but I have not the same proof of the fact as of the other things I here allege. What I chiefly complain of is, that second-class passengers are subjected not only to the calm and deliberate infliction of the 'horse-box' system, but that, having paid the stipulated fare, they are not even allowed to enjoy what they have paid for. This is quite evident. It is just as much a trick of the directors to drive third-class passengers, properly so called, into the second-class carriages, as to force these latter into the first: consequently, most trains run only first and second class; and those who are charged a certain price, for the express reason that it is proportionably high enough to keep them select, are compelled to travel with the class below themselves.

Every one knows that, especially in the manufacturing districts, mechanics and working-people are constantly passing and repassing at all hours of the day; they want to get home, or to their destination to-day, at a certain hour—they never think of waiting for the parliamentary train to-morrow. As the stages are commonly short, a few pence or even shillings make but slight difference in comparison with the evil of delay, and the result is, that no third class being provided, they travel second class. Thus, I have seen, between Leeds and Manchester, for example, a constant succession of oily mechanics, some tipsy, some sober, along with hobnailed farm-labourers, and females of anything but respectable appearance, thrust in at every station upon those, who, as I have just said, had paid a second-class fare, expressly with the intention and understanding that they were to be protected—in virtue of that fare—from travelling in company with that class of the community which conventionally is called third or fourth class. It is easy to say: 'These people pay as you do; it is not for us to turn them away.' I know all that perfectly well; but I say that the inevitable result is, that since you will not have carriages by which this class of persons would willingly travel, and since you cannot force me, against my will, to spend money I cannot afford in first-class fares, the result is, that as far as possible, I *stay at home*. This is not only my own case as an individual, but it affects a numerous party, of which I am the type; and if the real sentiments of our middling gentry could be as frankly expressed in conversation as mine are now, it would be found that the hinderance to travelling effected by the present arrangements is far greater than directors would readily believe. The fact is, that when persons habitually use first class, they have no reason to complain; and those who do not, have a natural shyness in admitting this incident of their social position. I am fully convinced, that a great many people of the class I have in view, endure all the annoyance and suffering entailed on them when they do travel; that they and their families are restrained, just as I and mine are, in their excursions, by the causes stated above; and yet that they shrink from exposing the evil to the eyes of their neighbours, by seeming, even, to know what are the grievances of poor number two. It is more genteel to talk about the luxury of modern locomotion, to praise the comfortable appointments of first-class carriages, &c., than to complain of aching bones and violated proprieties encountered in second-class.

I know that John Bull is, in some respects, a much-enduring animal; the *Bos piger* is slow to anger, especially when everybody else is in the same pickle as himself; but I confess I never could account to my own mind for the apathy shewn to the grievances of which I complain, except on the principle, that, in the very act, the man who *does* complain, does so at the expense of his *gentility*.

Do you suppose that those young officers whom I travelled with the other day from Dover to London, and who occupied the inner half of a divided 'horse-box,' would be heard at their club or mess-room inveighing against hard boards and a half-tipsy groom in a shabby livery? No, my brother of the middle rank, we *do* the thing; we execrate the 'rascally system;' we are up to all its iniquities; we would, if we could, put the whole body of directors for a month to ride, night and day, in a ballast-truck, and think it too good for them: in a word, brothers, we suffer; but we are too genteel to say anything about it. It is just because, for these reasons, there is no chance of bringing to bear on this question a regular pressure of public opinion, that I trust a fair statement of the simple truth, in a popular and widely circulated journal, may have the effect of giving an impulse in the right direction to that mass of discontent, of whose existence I have ample proofs. It may thus come to be suggested to those in power, that they themselves suffer by their ungenerous treatment of the public; and possibly a better state of things may yet be brought about.

I, for one, do complain that, in the fitting-up of second-class carriages, such utter negligence is shewn of the comfort of the traveller; but, supposing the vehicles to remain as they are, is it not monstrous and insulting to the last degree, that no accommodation should be provided in ordinary trains for that class of persons represented by number three? It cannot be expected that these people will be always inoffensive, and always even presentable; but so long as they submit to necessity, and pay the extra fare, they are voted on a par with all second-class passengers, and unhesitatingly ushered into their company. This is not their fault; the blame lies entirely with the cupidity of railway managers, who gladly adopt this additional mode of driving people into first-class fares. Again, even in trains where there are nominally third-class carriages, there is constantly an insufficient number of them, and the surplus passengers are bundled into the second-class. So strongly is this abuse felt, that the project is seriously discussed, of forming a sort of compact among travellers to avoid as much as possible second-class travelling altogether. It is said, with great truth, 'If we must travel without any selection of our company, we may as well save our money, and go third class at once.' It is also certain that foreigners express the most unmitigated astonishment at the English system, and the patience of those who submit to it as if unaware of its hardships and injustice. Still, I am sadly mistaken if, but for their habitual tenderness for their poor gentility, they would not soon let it be known that they are fully aware of their position—that they cordially resent it, but that the only revenge they can take is to stay at home as much as possible.

It can scarcely be, that I am so isolated in my feelings, habits, and circumstances, as that a vast number of persons of moderate fortune do not sympathise in the sentiments I here express. At the moment when I write this, I am leaving home for a journey to the house of a relative some 200 miles distant. But for the expense of first-class travelling, I should have formed probably a party of three persons. Not that I should have the slightest hesitation in going, accompanied by females, into the second-class, if it only *was* second-class conveyance. My knowledge, however, of the fact that no third-class carriages run with ordinary trains, and that therefore all sorts of people belonging properly to that class are invariably waiting to be conveyed by such trains as they can get to suit their exigencies, deters me altogether from thinking of increasing my party.

I consider this a perfectly fair illustration of my meaning. My object has been to shew that if a fair and rational regard were had to the reasonable complaints of us middle-class people—if we were left in quiet possession of our own carriages—if they were less in the horse-box style—and if means were not so obviously employed to compel us to 'take a first class,' whether we like it, or can afford it, or not—we should be better customers, and the companies and their dividends would be largely the gainers in the end.

VISITING MY WIFE'S RELATIONS.

My engagement with dearest Carry was a very long one indeed; there were tremendous obstacles in the way, by which the course of our true love was perpetually being brought up short and impeded. Carry is the offspring of the Reverend Claude Winkwerd; which was the son of Geoffrey Winkwerd of the Hall; which was the son of Sir Ralph Winkwerd, knight; at which point that pedigree stopped, for good and sufficient reasons: but she is also the issue of Margaret Lorraine; which was the daughter—by her second marriage with Colonel Slasher—of the Lady Blanche Trevor; which was the daughter of Lord Sleightovand—eighth baron—by which gap the Winkwerd family broke into Burke's *Peerage*, and even got connected in some extremely discreditable manner with royalty itself. Carry was therefore of course entitled to expect a good match, or, in other words, a husband with either blood or money. Now, my ancestral, or (being the second of my race, I should rather say) my paternal, name is Biles, and there is little in my income to excuse it. I had nevertheless enough to live upon, and to maintain my wife in something more than gentility, which was the Winkwerd horror. I could afford her a pony-chaise, that is, and a lady's-maid. The Rev. Claude had also a whole quiver full of daughters besides Carry, and found, perhaps, some little difficulty in supplying every arrow with a beau. Above all, I was an orphan, and had not a relative upon the face of Europe. Anything of that sort would have made our union hopeless; but my two younger brothers—both in the small-coal line—withdrew themselves, fortunately, to South Australia, and have gone under the general head of 'our colonial relations' ever since. They are now considered to be rather subjects of congratulation than disgrace; being always understood and described by my wife's family as a sort of merchant-princes, who head the untitled aristocracy of the other hemisphere.

Nevertheless, my connection with the Winkwerds is what a Biles, without my advantages, would describe as rather ticklish; and there are still such a number of 'ps' and 'qs' to be minded, and so many favourite expressions and quotations to be apologised for when amongst them, that I let the rectory and its inmates, as much as possible, alone. There was always some magnificent person being feasted and flattered up there by Mrs Winkwerd, in preparation for the matrimonial sacrifice, and I felt that I was in the way. 'My eldest daughter, Lady Toppingtower,' was well enough to talk about to people who did not know that her husband, Sir Richard, resided at Boulogne-sur-Mer, and visited his native land on Sundays only. But there was nothing attractive to a possible son-in-law in 'my dear child, Mrs Biles.' Carry was pitied, you see, for her condescension in having parted with herself at such an alarming sacrifice to me. 'Poor dear Carry,' her sisters said, 'was very happy, they really believed—as if it were the eighth wonder of the world that she should be so; and yet if I were inclined to tell tales, there were others of the same family at one time who laid themselves out pretty distinctly for—— But the Bileses were ever a chivalrous race, and I will not be the first of their short line to justify myself at the expense of Blanche, or Rose, or Kitty—of whom, however, I must say one was as bad as the other. Emily, the youngest and prettiest of the Winkwerds, was very different from the rest also in everything else: she was my wife's twin-sister, and the two were as like one another—with the trifling exception of a little mole under Carry's left ear—as a couple of peas. I could not, of course, be always looking for this mole, and I once put my arm round Emily at a picnic, and kissed her behind a lilac-tree, in mistake. 'I suppose, Mr Frederic, you meant it for Carry,' said she good-naturedly, and pretending to be disappointed. My wife took the greatest care after this circumstance to construct a code of signals, whereby we might recognise each other at once; and the accident, so far as I know at least, did not happen again. Emily was a dear good girl, and quite unspoiled, although she was the show-daughter of them all. It was quite clear to my respected mother-in-law that none of the rest would marry—Carry having already degraded herself—while Emily remained in the house single; so that it was determined she should do it at once, and give an opportunity to the three who had less time to spare. She received, to her extreme discomfort, twice the pin-money of any of her sisters, and was continuously apparelled in the most gorgeous array. Her masters for all the arts were increased and multiplied, and she was—if I may be allowed the expression—trotted out before eligible visitors pretty considerably.

I had the privilege of being useful to the family in recommending my old friend Jack Camellair to paint her portrait; and he achieved an admirable likeness. He and I had been great chums at school, but our walks in life had since diverged widely. I stuck from the first, like a respectable man, to business, and parted with it not till I could do so comfortably; he, from making clever caricatures of the ushers, had taken so to painting, poor fellow, as absolutely to choose it for a profession; living in the winter, so far as I could make out, nowhere; and during the summer months, under a little white umbrella. I had bought, for old acquaintance' sake, some early landscapes of his—of very great promise, I was told; and two or three later ones were just beginning to attract public notice, or I should never have persuaded Mrs Winkwerd to employ him at all; but, to my thinking, he lived a miserable life. He said, however, that he was twice as jolly as I was at all times, even at portrait-painting—a thing he hated, and only busied himself with when especially hard up; and that he did not doubt he should be one day as rich as Turner, and with all the world for his Ruskins. His face—so much of it at least as his hair, whiskers, and moustaches permitted of your seeing—was very fine; and he was accomplished and agreeable enough to please the Winkwerds, as an amusing sort of drawing-room artisan, immensely. He was suffered to do and say things that Frederic Biles, Esq., would have shrunk from in such company like a guilty thing; and, on his part, liked the rectory-folks so well, that, after taking Emily's likeness, he took that of the other sisters and their mother for love. He was employed upon the portrait of the Rev. Claude himself—with his hand upon a volume of sermons, surmounted by the *Peerage*—when a circumstance occurred, which, if I may use such a form of words, put poor Jack's nose out of joint, and settled his business for him very completely.

This was the arrival of no less a person than Ambrose Slasher, Esq., connected by family ties with the Winkwerds, and by red tape with the government then in power, being the paid *attaché* to Her Majesty's legation at Honolulu, and in a fair way to represent the empire there himself, when an opportunity should offer. He was not a wise man, he was not a good man, and he was not a rich man; but he was a sucking diplomatist likely enough in this glorious constitution of ours to become one of those three. The great mother Britannia is not wont to leave a scion of her Sleightovands to wither on L.600 a year, and Mrs Winkwerd knew it. Ambrose, although by no means 'so bald that you might see his brains,' was getting thin about the poll, grave in demeanour, slow of speech, pompous of aspect, and generally in accordance with his profession. I did not think he was at all a suitable husband for dear Emily, at first; and the more I saw of him the less I admired my respected mother-in-law's choice; but I am aware that a Biles can scarcely be a judge of such high matters. I have a portrait of him by Jack Camellair, which I would not part with for L.50, although I dare say Ambrose himself would give 5s. to have it burnt. If only knowledge puffeth up, I should like to know what ignorance has done to the attaché, to give him such a swollen appearance. He put down the Rev. Claude upon all occasions; he received all Mrs Winkwerd's servilities as his just dues, and was in no degree mollified or put in good-humour by them; he treated the young ladies with a sort of graceful scorn, and he was rude to Emily herself; yet all, except the last, seemed charmed with him. Jack's most perfect *mots* were now unheard in the applause that greeted the great man's heavy pleasantries; his raciest anecdotes were cast into the shade by some dull reminiscence of the diplomatist's foreign travel. I am afraid that Mr Thomas Moore's epitaph on a tuft-hunter applies more to women than to men:

> Apollo for a star they quit, and Love's own brother for an earl's.

I was angry at the change of behaviour among the Winkwerds generally towards Jack, on Mr Slasher's arrival, but I was sincerely grieved at that of Emily. She was in a very short time engaged to be married to this gentleman, it was true—it was in order to be present at the wedding that I was an unwilling guest at the rectory at this time; but this was no reason why she should follow Ambrose's stupid lead in regard to the poor painter. My wonder was how he stood it at all, and I privately recommended him to depart and leave the Rev. Claude just as he was, without a complexion and with sketchy legs; but Jack said: 'No; when he had taken an order, he liked to execute it;' mimicking my best business manner, and quoting my favourite phrase. Emily had been once, I thought, the most pleased with him of all, but now she offered him the cold-shoulder—and a good deal of it, as her style of dress permitted her to do—upon all occasions. She never failed to give the poor fellow a set-down when the diplomatist chanced to be present, and laughed heartily at his describing some obscure street in Honolulu as the habitation of tailors and artists. As Camellair observed, indeed, in allusion to this delicacy, Mr Slasher was 'a deuce of a fellow among eggs with a stick,' which was a word-picture of the man as good as tongue could paint. Still there was no pretence of affection on the part of the bride-elect; she had been disposed of by private contract some five weeks ago, and was to be given away without reserve on the ensuing Friday to Cousin Ambrose: that was the agreement; and she had determined, apparently, to abide by it; only at times when the diplomatising partook—it was but rarely—of a little too much of the *entente cordiale*, I observed her shiver, poor girl, as though, if I may so express myself, a goose was walking over her grave. She had been brought up in the Winkwerd school, however, and had well learned its lessons long ago; that was what I comforted myself with until the Wednesday evening before her wedding-day—although, indeed, my wife was very miserable about the match; declaring that her sister was about to be sold into bondage, which she truly was, and to a mere government organ; but then, who was to put a stop to it? I had sauntered out after dinner with a cigar, glad enough to escape from the bustle of the house, where everything was being got in readiness for the guests of the next day, and was strolling through that part of the grounds which is called 'the Wilderness,' when I came suddenly upon my wife, sitting upon a moss-bank bathed in tears.

'Now, my dear Carry,' said I, 'do give over this wailing over your poor little Emily. If the girl likes the fool, it is all a matter of taste, about which, you know, there is no disputing; if she doesn't like him, she should let him hang himself in his Honolulu ribbon before she should become Mrs Slasher. What must be, must be, and therefore I don't make myself wretched about it; although, for my part, I'd just as soon see her married to, to'—I looked about for a sufficiently base comparison, and thought myself rather fortunate at last in saying—'to that unfortunate penniless vagabond, Jack Camellair.'

'Would you, indeed, dear Mr Frederic?' sobbed out little Emily—for it was the one without the mole under her left ear I had been speaking to. 'O please, please, my good dear brother, to help us.' Poor passionful girl! The suffocating mask thrown off, and the weary part laid by for a little while, how different she looked from the Emily of an hour ago!—how infinitely wretched, and yet, to my mind, how far, far better through those tears! 'I don't like Mr Ambrose at all, for I am afraid of him,' she went on pathetically. 'I don't think he is very kindhearted; and, and, oh, my dear brother, for your own loving wife's sake, save me from this terrible man!'

'My eye and so and so,' said I, 'apologising to you at the same time, Miss Emily, for the vulgarity, but this is a precious pickle. What can the voice of a Biles avail you, lifted up against the whole Winkwerd chorus and the Sleightovand echo in the distance? I am sure I will insult Mr Slasher in any way you please, or even have a turn-up with him at fisticuffs—having been in trade, of course pistols are out of the question—when and where he chooses; but as for opposing your respected mother and the rest of your noble family in conclave, I could not do it, even for your sweet sake. I durst not, and that's the truth. "What is Miss Emily's objection?" would be their very natural remark, and I am sure I should not know how to answer it. You appeared to be very well satisfied with him; and, indeed, he is as good as half-a-dozen others who—— Well, my dear child, I don't intend to be cruel and unkind, but since you don't love anybody else'——

'Ah, but I do, dear Mr Frederic,' she sobbed—'I do: I do so very much love your friend, Mr Jack Camellair.'

'What!' said I, feeling scarcely less astonished and horror-struck than Mrs Winkwerd could have felt herself—'what! you daughter of a hundred kings, you pampered little pet of your family, are you prepared to lodge under a white umbrella, like the Great Mogul called Babo, to slave at mixing nasty colours, to sit as a model in all kinds of ridiculous costumes, to be hung up in exhibitions as "A Moorish Peasant Girl," "An Eastern Houri," or as "Passion: a Study?" Do you know what an exceedingly disrespectable profession painting is? Are you aware—to use no stronger expression—what an excessively scampish person Jack'——

'Yes, Fred, she knows all that, and more besides,' said the rich low voice of my handsome vagabond-friend. 'I have heard something of what you have said to my dear love, and I think there is much truth in it, and am sure you meant it well. My art is not, indeed, a very remunerative one; but even in that respect, I am better off than you imagine. If I have my health, I shall do very well as to money-matters, I don't doubt; at present, however, I confess I want a little help. I have two companion-pictures, "The Wooing," which you know, and the other, "The Winning," which has still some details to be worked in; you will lend me, Fred, I know, L.500 upon these two; that will suffice to last us in some quiet pretty place, less distant, if less fashionable, than Honolulu; and for interest, Emmy dear [think of this journeyman painter's having already cut it so short with this descendant of royalty as 'Emmy!'], pay the usurer beforehand with a kiss.' And as sure as I sit here and write it, my cigar was thereupon tenderly removed from the corner of my mouth, and the prettiest pair of lips (save one) in the world applied them in its place five times before I could even think of saying 'Don't' or 'For shame!' 'There, that'll do,' said Jack, rather impatiently, and with the air of a man who had conferred a favour: 'now, that's settled.'

Well, the name of Biles upon a check for L.500 was as good, and perhaps better, than that of any Slasher or Sleightovand of them all; and as I really felt for the poor girl, and hated the diplomatist, and knew Jack to be a thoroughly good fellow at heart, I gave them my autograph for the amount without more words, upon the condition that I should know nothing of their plans whatever, be they what they would; so that I might enjoy anything which might suddenly occur as much as anybody else, and afterwards be able to lay my hand upon my heart and deny everything; for I had that wholesome terror of Mrs Winkwerd, that I would as soon have been a party to a scheme of some Italian greyhound for carrying off the young of a lioness, as to the abduction of the glory of the Winkwerds by Jack Camellair. Having thus washed my hands, then, of the whole concern, I finished my cigar, and sauntered back to where the attaché, over his third bottle, was patronising universal nature as perceived in her July glory through the open French windows of the dining-room. He was just the sort of man who, when he has got his wine, begins to compliment the general arrangements of Providence, and 'looking as 'twere in a glass,' who 'smooths his chin, and sleeks his hair, and says the earth is beautiful.' He regarded Emily herself in the light of an ornament fabricated for his pleasure, calculated to adorn the Honolulu embassy, and do credit to his magnificence. 'She has much to learn, has Emily, Mr Biles,' he was good enough to confide in me that very evening; 'but she is pliant, and will become our position, we do not doubt.'

'Your excellency'—— said I.

'Not yet, sir,' he interrupted, with one of his most gracious inclinations.

'Your excellency'—I went on all the same—'is a great master, and the pupil is apt.'

The silly fat state-functionary liked meaningless pomposities of that kind beyond measure, as I knew, and was set bowing like a mandarin for several minutes.

On the next day, most of the wedding-company arrived: Lady Toppingtower, the married sister, who bore a sort of painful resemblance to Emily herself—she brought a half-starved-looking French maid with her, of whom she seemed to stand, nevertheless, in no little awe, and did not present a favourable example in any way of the bliss of high alliances: the Lord Sleightovand, a plump, jovial old nobleman, who seemed to have met with nothing up that long life-journey of his but carriages full of other jovial noblemen, and amusing beggars by the roadside, who stood on their heads for pennies, and were thankful for them: the Hon. and Rev. Swete Smilar, his brother, a gentleman of the most urbane grace, who had come express from Windsor to perform the mystic ceremony between his beloved cousin Emily, and his most respected and talented connection, Her Majesty's attaché—these two with a costly gift and a stilted phrase apiece for the young bride: and another Swete Smilar from his crack regiment at Gibraltar, with a Mediterranean jewel for her waist, and a kiss for his cousin's brow, which he claimed and imprinted to the astonishment of the groom-elect, before us all. There were no fewer than five aunts—two of the Winkwerd, and three of the Trevor family, one of the latter of whom I was given to understand was made of money. She was made of a good number of other things besides, however; and Jack Camellair expressed to me a private wish to take two sketches of her, to be entitled 'Before,' and 'After,' which he reckoned would become popular: the one with her false eyebrows, hair, teeth, colour, and figure on; and the other without these accessories. There were also eight bridemaids, selected exclusively from the families of the landed gentry; and the rectory was full.

The Rev. Claude, I will do him the justice to say, was, with the exception of my dear Carry, the only person who did not seem thoroughly satisfied with the pending event: he was perpetually expressing his delight about it, and asking the opinion of everybody upon the subject, which he intended should be given only in one way. He came down from his pedestal so great a number of steps even, as to demand mine. 'Don't you think, sir, that Mr Ambrose gives one quite the idea of one of England's diplomatists?' To which I assented fervently. He went about the house shaking hands with all sorts of people he did not care for, in a nervous fill-up-the-time sort of manner, and kissing his poor Emily perpetually, as though she were about to take some doubtful or hazardous step. Whenever this happened, all her stateliness melted away at once, and she rested on her dear father's bosom like a rose-bud touched with the dew. Once, I am perfectly certain, she was about to tell him something, and make a regular scene, only she caught two pair of eyes fixed upon her at that very moment—Mr Ambrose Slasher's, saying rather languidly, but with quite sufficient malice, nevertheless: 'What! you're sorry to go away from home, are you, and afraid to trust yourself to my tender mercies, young woman?' and Jack's, appealing to her with the expression of his own 'Tullus Aufidius,' in last year's Exhibition, where he is evidently remonstrating with Coriolanus, besought by his mother: 'Now you won't go, surely, in a moment of filial indiscretion, and wreck all our little plans.'

What Jack's plans were, as I have said, I knew nothing about; but my fears for their discovery made the day pass wearily enough. I should have thought, if it had not been for a certain tender gratefulness in Emily's 'Good-night' that evening, that all hope of out-manœuvring the attaché had died away. That great man sat up half the night in the library with an enormous desk, transacting the fag-ends of his bachelor-business—burning love-letters, and destroying locks of hair, as he would have had us believe, and did not retire till about one o'clock. I heard his stately step ascend the stairs with official regularity; and presently—for he slept in the adjoining chamber—the deep bass notes proclaim that one of Britannia's guardians was relaxing his perpetual vigilance. I strove to keep awake to catch more interesting sounds which might betoken that his rest was being taken every advantage of. I thought I heard a fairy tread upon the landing outside, then two soft voices whispering, and the French window beneath slide open, as though under the influence of salad oil; but it may have been, as I told Carry, who heard it also, nothing but the cats. 'There's somebody getting into the house,' said she; but I gave her my word of honour that there was certainly nothing of that kind, but quite the reverse.

Early in the morning she got up, tearful, to go to her sister's room. She came back, as I expected, almost immediately, white and trembling. 'Frederic, Frederic, what do you think has happened? Mr Camellair and Emily have run away!' I was pretending to be fast asleep just then, but I could not help blurting out: 'Well, I'm very glad to hear it;' then recollecting myself, and before she had time to attack me: 'Very glad that Emily has got a fine day; what did you say about Mr Camellair?' but I'm half afraid my wife suspected me.

What an awful row there was in a few minutes! I heard Mr Slasher pulling on his patent-leather boots with the most undiplomatic expressions; I heard a tumult of sobs from the bridemaids' chambers, who were sleeping four in a room, and I saw them like a Greek chorus, at their doors, in white; I caught a glimpse of Aunt Belinda Trevor, sans teeth, and almost sans everything, as she stood at her threshold, anathematising the fugitives, and announcing her intention of erasing Emily from her will; I heard the man in the crack regiment laughing out of the next window but three, until exhausted, and afterwards he began again; I heard my own name uttered vehemently by my respected mother-in-law, and I locked my door and retreated into my bed at once. 'Mr Biles, do you know anything about this? Mr Biles! Mr Biles!' and at that inoffensive monosyllable, the whole household seemed to rally around my door. 'When did they go? How did they get away? Where have they run to? Where's the key of the stable, Mr Biles?' (Clever Jack, to hide the key of the stable!) 'I don't know,' was my answer to everything that was asked of me, until I lost my patience, when I varied my reply by adding, 'and I don't care.'

Catching the young couple was luckily out of the question, for they had taken the only four horses—the horses that were provided for the *other* husband—five hours ago with them, and it was only thirty miles to the Scotch border.

I told Slasher it was of no use his getting into a passion with me, and he contented himself at last with abusing all painters, and Jack in particular. 'I saw rogue in his eyes when I first looked at him,' said he; but, as Camellair remarked when he heard of this: 'Perhaps it was only the reflection.'

The magnifico, indeed, although very savage, was not the sort of man to die of a broken heart; the three remaining Winkwerd girls, indeed, set to work so vigorously to comfort him, that, in course of years, Blanche, the plainest, married and kept him in the family after all. Until that happened, the name of Camellair was forbidden to be breathed at the rectory, but there was soon afterwards a great reconciliation. I had got my L.500 back long before then—the 'Winning' alone, when finished, fetched the whole of the money—and Jack had found himself famous. To the original of his celebrated picture of 'The First Born,' which hangs in half the drawing-rooms of Mayfair, I had the pleasure of being godfather; and I brought the first 'proof before letters' down to the Rev. Claude with my own hands. 'Why doesn't he come and finish my picture?' said the old gentleman, with the tears standing in his eyes at the sight of his grandson. Jack came down, like a good fellow, with his little family to the rectory at once. My respected mother-in-law set her—if she will pardon the expression—set her back up at him at first most uncommonly; but lately, since he has become an R.A., and is likely to be knighted, she has not been able to resist his delightful manners. He has given me the go-by in her good graces very easily, and she calls him 'John;' whereas, during the whole of my long connection with her honourable self, I have never passed the limit of 'Mr B.' Jack makes as much at home as his excellency himself—who *is* his excellency now—enjoys at Honolulu; and besides that, he has the satisfaction of working for it.

SALMON AND THE SALMON-TRADE.

OUR recent observations on the science of pisciculture, shewed that, by artificial aid, we could so assist the operations of nature, as greatly to multiply our stock of fish; more particularly those belonging to the salmon family. The article Pisciculture traced the fish from the egg or spawn till it was a few months old, leaving it in its reception-pond as salmon-fry—a tiny little thing not more than an inch and a half in length. Even while in this state, the infant salmon has attracted great attention, and from its youth up has afforded as much scope for the learned speculations of our naturalists as any other branch of natural history. There has been no end of controversy about the genus *Salmo;* and from its birth, to the time when it finds its place on the table, in the shape, perhaps, of *côtelettes de saumon à l'Indienne*, it has been the subject of innumerable wars—on paper—most of them carried on in the pages of the transactions of learned societies, and not therefore accessible to the general public.

The most important of the many controversies which have arisen in connection with the natural history of the salmon, is undoubtedly that relating to the parr, which some persons scarcely allow to be yet settled as the young of that fish, notwithstanding the evidence that has been brought before them in the course of the controversy. The question at issue was primarily, whether the plentiful little fish, known in Scotland as the parr, and in England as the samlet, was really the young of the salmon, and became in the course of time first a smolt, then a grilse, and last change of all, assuming the noble shape of the full-grown fish; and second, at what time the change from the parr to the smolt took place. As we have already hinted, the amount of controversy on the subject has been great, some writers contending that the parr is a distinct fish, totally unconnected with the salmon, living and dying, in fact, without changing its condition; while others asserted, and, as time tells us, with more truth, that it became in the course of nature a smolt, and then changed in due time to the delicious fish so prized by epicures for the table, and so valued by men of commercial tastes for its capability of being changed into gold. Considering the parr question as being effectually settled by the experiments at Stormontfield, we propose in the present paper to address ourselves to a consideration of an equally important branch of the salmon question—supply and demand.

In recent papers, we indicated the vast food-resources which the skill of man might gather from the sea. The fecundity of fish in general is something so enormous as to be truly wonderful, and seems to offer us a continuous and almost boundless supply. This will be at once apparent, when we state that a single cod-fish has been estimated to contain 9,384,000 eggs, and a flounder weighing twenty-four ounces has contained nearly a million and a half; whilst the herring, the mackerel, and other fishes are known to be equally prolific. The salmon is a most productive fish, the roe varying between 1500 and 5000. When we take into account this enormous power of replenishment peculiar to the fish-world, it is not easy to realise the fact of constantly decreasing supplies of salmon, a fish so carefully watched, and so much protected by legislation; but a little inquiry into the matter affords a ready solution of the apparent mystery. We will enumerate some of the drawbacks which have led to the yearly decline in the supply of this valuable commodity.

One of the greatest causes of scarcity is the few fish which are now allowed to arrive at maturity. When the eggs are deposited naturally, Sir Humphry Davy calculates that only about 800 out of every 17,000 of them arrive at the phase of marketable salmon. Our readers are already familiar with the enemies of the spawn, and the dangers to which it is exposed, when left unguarded at the mercy of its various enemies. The dangers awaiting the advent of the young fish into the river, when they are pond-bred, are no less destructive. The moment they escape from their nursery at Stormontfield, their sorrows begin, and they are certainly as numerous, if not so traditional, as those of the young bear. In the parr state, they are esteemed a dainty morsel by various other fishes, such as the yellow trout, the pike, eel, &c.; and even their own mothers and fathers—awful cannibals that they are!—swallow them by the dozen. In reference to the voracity of that fresh-water shark, the pike, Mr Buist, the superintendent of the Tay fisheries, relates the following facts. Some gentlemen having had a trout-net manufactured for Highland loch-fishing, asked leave to test its powers on one of the Tay fishing-stations. 'The trial was made about the middle of May, at a place in the Tay near to where the Almond joins it. At the first sweep, they hauled ashore sixty-seven pikes, and in killing them, they observed several vomiting salmon-fry. This raised the curiosity of those who were engaged in fishing, and the persons to whom the pikes were given were desired to examine their stomachs. This was done, and every one was found to have less or more of salmon-fry in different stages of digestion; many of them had five each. If such destruction as this occurred at one place, what must it be in the whole of the Tay and its many tributaries?' One great use of the breeding-ponds will be the protection afforded to these parrs. They are not set at liberty till they have reached the smolt state, and are therefore better able to protect themselves; but even as smolts they cannot escape the numerous 'dangers of the deep' incidental to the way of life of all kinds of fish, which are notorious for preying on each other, and few of which ever reach the 'sear and yellow leaf' of old age. If the sea-going shoal of smolts escape the numerous dangers which beset them in the river, they are menaced, on entering the salt water, by a horde of enemies. Crowds of different kinds of fish of the *gadidæ* family are lying in wait for them. That this is a trying ordeal for the shoal of beautiful young smolts, may be estimated from the fact, that as many as seven or eight have been taken from the stomach of a single coal-fish. The dolphin, the sunfish, the porpoise, the cod-fish, and many others, are particularly fond of smolts. Otters, too, are remarkable for their *penchant* for all kinds of fish, and are particularly fond of the choicest cut of a young salmon or a tender grilse; indeed, the fish after being seized by this animal, is frequently found left at the side of the river, with only a bite or two taken out of the shoulder, and the rest quite good for food. Both the sethe (coal-fish) and the syth are found in shoals watching for the smolts, and numerous others of the great monsters of the deep lie in wait for the young of the salmon—their unerring instinct teaching them when these fish will appear. The perils of the salmon, from the day the egg is deposited, till the period when the fish reaches the fishmonger's counter, are so numerous as to prevent more than this allusion to them at present.

Another of the many causes which tend to decrease the supply, is thus stated by Mr Daniel Ellis, in a *résumé* of the House of Commons' Report, which was published some years ago in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*. 'The evidence in this Report,' he says, 'goes to prove that the productiveness of the salmon-fish has decreased, and is decreasing, in almost all the rivers in the United Kingdom; but this decrease arises, not so much from the changes in the habits of the fish, or in the condition and circumstances of our rivers, as from the operation of injudicious laws in relation both to the times and modes of fishing; from the prevalence of most destructive practices and incredible abuses in almost all our rivers; and from the indulgence of a too greedy spirit of gain, which, instead of waiting for the natural production of the golden egg, cuts up at once the animal that can produce it.'

One of the 'destructive practices' above alluded to, is certainly a deadly drain upon the productive powers of the fish. We allude to the system of poaching, which is so extensively carried on during 'close time.' Few of our readers can have any idea of the immense numbers of salmon which are destroyed by this cause, and at the very time when they are at their greatest value, intent on the propagation of their kind; indeed, on the very spawning-bed itself, the 'deadly leister' is hurled, with unerring aim and mighty force; and the slain fish, safely hidden in the poacher's bag, is carried off to be sold and kippered for the English market. A party will start at nightfall, and dividing into two companies, sweep the Tweed with a net from shore to shore, and capture everything of the salmon kind that comes within reach. A person comes at a time arranged, and carries away the spoil, which he pays for at the rate of threepence per pound-weight. The takes, upon such occasions, average from ten to forty fish. The first night upon which our informant—a weaver—went out, the result was seventeen large fish—three of which weighed ninety pounds. Upon the second occasion, the take was much larger—thirty-eight salmon of a smaller size being the reward of their iniquity; weighing, in the aggregate, 640 pounds, and producing in cash L.8 sterling, divided among eleven people. Single fish are frequently killed on the spawning-bed; the male salmon being preferred, as its flesh is not in so bad a condition as that of the female. Sometimes both male and female are transfixed at a single stroke!

The farm-servants at the farm-steadings near the river frequently indulge in the same 'sport'—sport which Mr Younger of St Boswells pithily describes as being 'desperate, daring, devilish, and cruel.' The farmer, having no interest in protecting the fish, and sometimes not objecting to a share of the spoil, allows the matter to take its regular course. The necessary lights are furnished out of the resinous roots of the pine-tree. These provided, a band of men, numbering twenty or thirty individuals, are collected; and disguised in ragged clothes, and with blackened faces or masks, they proceed to the 'reds,' or spawning-beds, and lighting their torches, begin their unholy work, undeterred by the water-bailiffs, some of whom, collected on an adjoining height, may perhaps be viewing the picturesque scene, afraid to interfere.

We may just cite one other cause which must certainly affect the health of the fish, both in their infantile condition and in their more mature state—that is, the rapidly changing condition of our salmon-rivers. It must be borne in mind, that since the time of the sitting of the House of Commons' committee, a perceptible change must have taken place in many of our streams in consequence of the erection of mills, manufactories, &c., which discharge all the used water, frequently poisoned with dye-stuffs, &c., into the very channels frequented by the breeding-fish. It is no doubt essential that manufactories should be erected within easy reach of water-power; but is it necessary that the used water should be again turned into the stream from whence it was drawn pure, poisoned with mineral or vegetable colours? Could it not be collected and used up as liquid-manure? Are there no chemical processes which would render it of value, or which might, at anyrate, neutralise its baneful effects on fish? We noted, in the evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, as to a recent water-bill for Edinburgh, that one of the gentlemen connected with some kind of manufactory on the banks of the Water of Leith, stated that he had never seen a living fish within a mile or two of the place. A writer in an agricultural work says, that 'draining the land on the banks of rivers is said to have injured them as fishing-rivers, by destroying their equability; that is, before the draining, the rain that fell upon the land found its way to the rivers with difficulty, and so kept the streams equable for long; now it finds its way to the rivers at once, and consequently causes a heavy flow all at once, but that over, leaves the river habitually low.' The disappearance of salmon from the Mersey is stated to be in consequence of the river Irwell bringing down to it all the filth of Manchester; and the disappearance of the fish from some of the rivers of Norway is supposed to result from the immense quantity of timber-dust sent into the water from the various mills.

One other regulating element in the supply of salmon is the fact, that the parrs are not afforded the same protection as we accord to the smolt. Hundreds of them are killed by juvenile anglers without the slightest remorse. A smart little fellow, spending his vacation on the banks of the Isla, writes home in triumph to his father that he and grandpapa had caught 390 'parries' in a day. Think of that! Why, if only the odd 90 fish had been allowed to arrive at maturity, they might, in the course of nature, have added a large sum to the national wealth of the country. We know a respectable widow, living on the banks of a salmon-river, who fed her pigs on the parrs caught by her children. The Ettrick Shepherd waxes eloquent on the destruction of these infant salmon, and calls this spoliation 'a loss and a grievance of dreadful enormity.' In another part of an article on the subject, he says: 'Let the proprietors of rivers only think of the millions of these precious fry with which every Cockney angler's basket in the United Kingdom is stuffed, and without which that species of fishermen would get no sport.' The Shepherd estimates the destruction by each angler at about twenty dozen a day, or 40,000 per annum. 'It is worthy of legislative interference,' says Mr Hogg, and we quite agree with him. Smolts are protected with the utmost rigour of the law. Only a few weeks ago, a respectable tea-dealer from Edinburgh, angling in the Tweed, had the misfortune to capture a few—ten, we think, was the number—when, lo! he was pounced upon, and soon found out his error, by having to pay a fine, and expenses amounting to L.5, besides bringing an advocate from Edinburgh to defend him in a local court. Why protect the smolts and neglect the parr, now that it is known to all to be the young of the salmon?

Twopence per pound-weight used to be at one time the usual retail-price of salmon in Scotland. That was before Mr G. Dempster of Dunnichen had discovered the art of packing it in ice, or the steam-boat or railway-engine had been invented to whirl it off to London, Manchester, or Liverpool, or the still more distant continental markets to which Mr Saunders of Billingsgate informs us it is now sent in its fresh state. This discovery of Mr Dempster may be said to have been the means of commencing the Scotch and Irish salmon-trade, which has proved so great a source of wealth to the proprietors, as the price soon began to rise when London came into competition with local markets. This discovery has undoubtedly been the inducement to that overfishing which has been tending in later years to reduce the supplies. The great desire to obtain profit from the fishings, has led to a much greater anxiety to kill fish than to breed them. It is quite certain that we shall never again hear of salmon being sold at twopence per pound. In these days, a good fish, in one of the fashionable west-end fish-shops in the early London season, is worth as much as a prime sheep. Any person having access to a file of the *Times* will be able to trace the gradual increase in the price of salmon in late years, during which it has progressed from season to season, till it has reached the present rates of 2s., 3s., and sometimes even 5s. per pound-weight in London. And even in provincial towns much nearer the sources of supply, 2s. a pound can be readily obtained for the best parts. The old proverb of coals being dearer at Newcastle than anywhere else can also be illustrated in the salmon-trade, as we have found from experience that the fish is fully 10 per cent. dearer on the banks of the Tay, where it is caught, than in Edinburgh.

There can be no doubt of the great value of the salmon as an article of commerce. Princely revenues were at one time derived from the rivers in which this fish was wont to abound. Even yet, with a supply which is yearly diminishing, the money derived from salmon-fisheries must form a considerable item in some rent-rolls. We may instance the case of Lord Gray, who has drawn from the Tay a sum amounting to more than L.100,000 during the last thirty-five years. The salmon and grilse supplied for this sum run from 10,000 to 28,000 a year. As shewing what a mere lottery salmon-fisheries are, we may state that, in 1831, when 10,000 fish were taken, the rental of the station alluded to was L.4000; and that in 1842, when the capture was 28,453 fish, the rental was L.1000 *less*! Indeed, we have some cause for wonder in the matter of fishery rentals, seeing that various economists who have written on the subject, say that for several years past the fisheries have been an annual loss to the lessees. If we calculate the income for the two years specified above, we have the following result: Averaging the fish at 5s. each, gives us a total sum of L.2500 for the 10,000 year, shewing a loss of L.1500; while on the other year there is a profit of upwards of L.4000. The average number of fish captured on the fishery of Kinfauns for ten years, about the end of last century, was—salmon, 8720; grilse, 1714. That was before the existence of stake-nets. In the first ten years of the present century, the average catch of salmon fell to 4666, and the grilse numbered 1616. After the stake-nets were removed, and in the ten years from 1815 to 1824, the number of salmon caught was 9010, while the grilse amounted to 8709. As illustrative of the value of the Tay fisheries, it may be mentioned that the stations from Perth to Newburgh, ten in number, have produced the following income for the years named—namely, in 1851, L.7813; in 1852, L.6098; in 1853, L.6962; in 1854, L.7762; in 1855, L.8417; and it may be stated generally, that although the rents drawn for some of the fisheries are less than before, the average shews an increase.

The difference on particular rents is, however, striking: thus, Lord Gray's, at one time as high as L.4000, was let in 1855 at little more than L.2000; whilst a different station, which was at one period let for L.91 per annum, now brings in an annual revenue of L.500.

The commercial fisheries on the Tweed, which are those of the lower part of the river, have been for some years past very unproductive, excepting the season of 1854. We need not extend our figures further back than from 1821 to 1825, when the average produce of salmon and grilse was, in round numbers, 100,000 per annum. Ten years after the latter year, the number caught was 22,642 salmon, and 87,707 grilse. In 1845, after a lapse of other ten years, the figures are 8962 salmon, and nearly 70,000 grilse; but in 1855 the take was much smaller, the numbers being about 6000 salmon, and only 15,000 grilse. The seasons of 1816 and 1842 are remarkable for the large takes of grilse both in this river and in the Tay, and it would be curious to ascertain from practical men the reasons for this—many of them, it is said, can foretell very good or very bad seasons. In 1842, the take of grilse on the Tweed was close on 110,000, which was certainly an immense number. But their destruction in such wholesale quantities is perfect madness; they should be allowed to continue their species before being killed. The two or three shillings derived from each of these grilses would in a year or two have been as many pounds. No wonder the salmon gets every year more and more a rarity, when so many of the young fish are slaughtered in the grilse state. So far as the parent fish is concerned, Lord Gray's fishings alone (on the Tay) seem equal to the whole of the commercial stations on the Tweed. The rental of this river was at one period as high as L.20,000; it has been successively L.12,000 and L.10,000, but now it is less than L.5000; and fishing-stations which used to yield fish in tens of thousands, are now reduced to hundreds. At one station on the Tweed, where 17,000 fish have been taken, only a few hundreds can be caught. We may state, however, that a great number of salmon are taken before they can get into the river—because at stations five miles on either side of Tweedmouth, large numbers are fished, equalling perhaps half of the quantity taken by the river fishermen. An intelligent writer on the subject of the Tweed-fisheries says, in August last year: 'The tendency is still downwards, especially with grilse; and I regret to say that, so far as this season has gone, salmon are not more than one-third of what they were last year—grilse are considerably short of what they were last year, although it was the worst upon record.'

It is difficult to obtain reliable statistics on the salmon-produce of our rivers in Scotland, there is so much jealousy on the subject between rival tacksmen, but this we have ascertained to be true, as was stated by witnesses before one of the committees of the House of Commons, 'that the skill and perseverance of the fishers are now so great, that, under the stimulus which ready markets and high prices afford, very few of the clean salmon which once pass up our rivers, are again permitted to return to the sea.'

The English salmon-fisheries are now so much decayed as to be unworthy of consideration as a source of national wealth. Although the Thames formerly produced a number of fine fish, we believe the capture of a single salmon in that river is an event of special rarity. Fish are still taken in the Severn and some of the other rivers of England, but not to any great extent. London and the English markets generally are therefore almost entirely indebted to Scotland and Ireland for their abundant supplies of this delicacy, which, by means of ice-packing and steam-carriage, is placed on the dining-tables of London and Paris in a state of freshness which ought to satisfy the most fastidious appetite.

'Justice to Ireland' demands that we should devote a portion of our space to a notice of the Irish salmon-fisheries, which are of great antiquity, and which were, up to the year 1842, remarkably productive. And although they have fallen off in their supplies since that period, a vast quantity of salmon is still derived from the rivers of green Erin. In Ireland, as in Scotland, there was at one time a perfect glut in the salmon-market. Antiquaries mention that the fishermen of Lough Neagh and the Bann complained more frequently of the bursting of their nets through the overgreat take of fish, than of any want. Indeed, salmon, Evelyn says, was so plentiful in the Irish rivers, as to be hunted and dived for by dogs. In these early days, most of the fish, as was the case in Scotland, must have been salted; and we know that in that state large parcels of it were sent to England, and still larger supplies to the Catholic countries of the continent, where it was profusely used on fast-days. The trade, upon the discovery of steam, and such modes of packing as admitted of its being sent in a fresh state to the English and other markets, received a new stimulus, and the fishers obtained better prices than when it was sold in its pickled or dried state. Salmon can be easily and expeditiously carried from Ireland to Liverpool, and the value of the fish, as retailed in its fresh state, is at present about four times that of the best mutton.

The Irish salmon-fisheries seem in former days to have been even more productive than those of Scotland, and as they are more numerous and much larger, the annual quantity of fish was measured by hundreds of tons. It has been stated in evidence by Sir Richard de Burgo that, in his opinion, by means of proper development, the salmon-fisheries of the former country would speedily attain a yearly value of two millions sterling, instead of nearly L.300,000, which was about their value in 1847. We have no statistics since those of last year as to the Irish fisheries, but it is quite certain that there is a great falling off in the supplies, just as in Scotland, and no doubt from the same causes. 'So plentiful were salmon at one time in the Bann, that, according to Mr Finlay, 1400 have been caught at a single haul, and 1000 at a succeeding one.' Mr Worthington says: 'The average take of salmon annually at the chief salmon-rivers at that period (1842), may be taken at about 200 tons each; the Foyle fishery, in 1842, produced nearly 300 tons. Shortly anterior to 1842, in one town on the Shannon (Glin), L.3000 worth of salmon was sold in one season. The great fishery of the Moy, at Ballina; the Blackwater at Lismore; and last, not least, the Erne at Ballyshannon, produced also their hundreds of tons.'

We do not propose to enter into the question of salmon legislation, or to discuss the varied modes of capture, which have frequently formed matter of controversy; we may just allude, however, to one other matter connected with the salmon question, and that is, the diversity of interests occasioned by the numerous proprietary of such of our great rivers as contain this fish. There have been many proposals and suggestions made on the subject, and we cannot help feeling that the fishing interests are too numerous for the safety of the fish and the increase of the supply. When each man who leases a fishing is intent on spoliating his own division of the river, making, as a matter of trade, the most of his particular interest, the general interest must suffer in the long-run. Could the whole proprietors of a particular river not form themselves into a joint-stock company for the purpose of breeding and fishing for the general interest? This would be better than spoliating at particular stations, at the risk of impoverishing others. The upper portions of the river could be appropriated to breeding-ground, and the fishing could be managed at one or two particular stations. In connection with this, a great extension of the artificial hatching system might take place, and so the salmon would increase and multiply, and become a property of greater value than it ever was before.

STANZAS.

Still the same, ever the same, this outward face of things!
Time but toucheth it gently; little the change it brings.
Here where we sat together spreadeth the self-same tree—
Curved and matted the branches, just as they used to be.
Even the rich-toned lichen keepeth its place and form,
Mellowing the old gray oak-bark, tinting it sunset-warm.
Grandly the dome of beech-trees archeth the old wood o'er;
Vividly fretteth the sorrel the deep brown beech-leaf floor.
Even the delicate flowers cling to the self-same spot;
Meadow-sweet decks the river, and blue forget-me-not;
Close to the feathery larch-tree the woodbine clingeth still,
The wild-rose scents the valley, the golden gorse, the hill.
Cruel, O cruel Nature! put away the treacherous veil!
Put away the smile of mockery—tell us a truer tale!
Shatter the painful image of thy changeless trees and stones!
Thou art a whited sepulchre all full of mould'ring bones!
Green is the grass above our graves; dearer the death below;
No wood-songs bring our music back—it ceased too long ago;
Why should thy soulless beauty, then, thus everlasting seem,
The while our living flowers fade, and vanish like a dream?

Thus spake I, standing lonely in the old unchanging scene,
Marking the empty setting where the living gems had been;
But the solemn voice of Nature rose on the wind and said:
'Why wilt thou still be seeking the living amid the dead?
The seed and the berry moulder, and the hard stone mouldreth not;
But where rise the beauteous flowers?—where the seed and the berry rot.'

J. M. H.

LOW VALUE OF LIFE IN CHINA.

While so many elements of vitality are in a state of activity for the reproduction and sustenance of the human race, there is probably no part of the world in which the harvests of mortality are more sweeping and destructive than in China, producing voids which require no ordinary appliances to fill up. Multitudes perish absolutely from want of the means of existence—inundations destroy towns and villages and all their inhabitants; it would not be easy to calculate the loss of life by the typhoons or hurricanes which visit the coasts of China, in which boats and junks are sometimes sacrificed by hundreds and by thousands. The late civil wars in China must have led to the loss of millions of lives. The sacrifices of human beings by executions alone, are frightful. At the moment in which I write, it is believed that from 400 to 500 victims fall daily by the hands of the headsman in the province of Kwang-tung alone. Reverence for life there is none, as life exists in superfluous abundance. A dead body is an object of so little concern, that it is sometimes not thought worth while to remove it from the spot where it putrefies on the surface of the earth. Often have I seen a corpse under the table of gamblers—often have I trod over a putrid body at the threshold of a door. In many parts of China there are towers of brick or stone, where toothless—principally female—children are thrown by their parents into a hole made in the side of the wall. There are various opinions as to the extent of infanticide in China, but that it is a common practice in many provinces admits of no doubt. . . . . Father Ripa mentions, that of abandoned children, the Jesuits baptised in Peking alone not less than three thousand yearly. I have seen ponds which are the habitual receptacle of female infants, whose bodies lie floating about on their surface.—*Sir John Bowring.*

COAL-OIL.

The production of oil from coal is not a new discovery, but the discovery of coal-beds in this country of a character to yield a sufficient amount of oil to pay the expense of extraction, has but recently been made. In Scotland, the Boghead coal has for several years been used solely for distillation, being far too valuable for fuel. The oil from this coal is used upon the English and French railways, and the demand is always in excess of the supply. Railway managers prefer it to the best sperm-oil. In Nova Scotia, there is another deposit of coal at the Prince Albert Mine, which also yields a good quality of oil; and these, with the exception of the Breckinridge, are the only localities yet known where the coal yields a sufficient quantity of oil to pay the expense of manufacturing. Since the experiments of the Breckinridge company were made with such a successful result, the whole country has been explored for oil-bearing coals, but thus far the experiments have resulted in disappointment. No coal has been yet found which could be made to yield much more than one-half the results of the Breckinridge, and of course could not come into competition with it. When experiments with this coal had fully satisfied the parties engaged in them of its great value as an oil-producer, a company was at once formed, under the management of the Messrs Cairns, who made a contract for a series of years with the Breckinridge Coal-company for a supply of their coal, and commenced putting up works for manufacturing oil at Cloverport, Kentucky—the shipping port on the Ohio River of the Coal-company. When the whole plant has been set up, the product of the company will be 15,000 gallons crude, or 13,000 gallons refined oil, per week. This would give 780,000 gallons per annum. —*New York Tribune.*

NEW DECIMAL MONETARY SYSTEM.

This system (from the *Argus* Australian paper), based on the 5s. or crown-piece, has the merit of not disturbing the value of the existing paper, gold, or silver currency.

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Gold—		
Sovereign, L.1, .	= 4 ″ ,	= 400 ″
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Crown, . .	= 1 ″ ,	= 100 ″
Silver—		
Five-shilling piece,	= 1 ″ ,	= 100 ″
Half-crown, ...		= 50 ″
Florin, ...		= 40 ″
Shilling, ...		= 20 ″
Sixpenny-piece, ...		= 10 ″
Threepenny-piece, ...		= 5 ″

The author of the above proposes a new paper issue of L.2, 10s.—10 crowns, 1000 cents—and L.1, 5s.—5 crowns, 500 cents; but the less appearance of innovation there is at first, the better chance the decimal system will have.

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OUR FRIEND THE GOVERNOR.

We were bound for Madras direct, with liberty to call at the Cape. Madeira, with its balm-breathing atmosphere and sunny clime, had long since been left astern. The warm sunshine, genial breezes, clear skies, and deep-blue waters of the tropics, wherein our gallant craft was wont to 'steal silently on her course,' were to us but as pleasant memories of the past, the more to be regretted from the chilly reception we experienced from the keen and cutting blasts that too soon proclaimed the inhospitality of those dreary regions of the far south, whither we were slowly progressing. The change was anything but agreeable, especially when we found ourselves driven a long way out of our course by a succession of south-easterly winds. However, at this juncture, when every one on board was in despair from the tedium and monotony of a passage that was becoming absolutely insupportable, the old adage of 'it's an ill wind that blows nobody good' was verified, in a way that was both agreeable to ourselves, as well as beneficial to the worthy individual whose strange history forms the subject of the present paper. How this was brought about was briefly as follows:

As was then frequently the case, we were one afternoon beating under double-reefed topsails against a strong south-easterly gale. A heavy sea was running. Dark masses of portentous-looking clouds swept rapidly across the sky, apparently pausing in their aërial flight for the purpose of warning us of the coming gale, of which they were the precursors. Still the old craft staggered on, and rolled and pitched, and lurched through the seething waters, in defiance of the storm, which momentarily increased in force, and the waves in size. It was a cheerless scene; and, save the officer of the watch, who paced the poop in gloomy meditation, and a few old salts who varied their pleasant occupation of knotting yarns under the lee of the weather-bulwarks, by skilfully dodging the little cataracts that occasionally invaded their retreat, not a soul was visible on deck.

Between decks, everything was equally uninviting, and not the least, the close stifling atmosphere inseparable from closed ports and hatches. Round the solitary steerage-lanterns, whose oscillating rays dimly revealed the long and dreary perspective of cabin bulkheads, which, at every roll and lurch, creaked and moaned a melancholy discord to the shrill but musical treble of the gear aloft, were grouped a few of the more adventurous of the passengers, who, weary of the confinement of their cabins, determined to shew themselves on deck, and brave the fury of the elements. Thither also the present writer repaired, and in their congenial society awaited the arrival of his respected commander, with whom, as midshipman of the watch, he had the honour of an invitation to dine that afternoon. Seven bells were struck: as the last sound floated away to leeward, the portly form of the captain emerged from the hatchway, and the hitherto almost deserted decks suddenly assumed a most animated appearance. Crowds of cuddy servants, headed by their chief, the steward, hurried to and fro, laden with the good things our gallant host had provided; the prospect of enjoying them being enhanced by our hearing him give the order to the officer of the watch to 'let her fall off four points, and round in the weather-braces.' During the execution of this most welcome command, we entered the dining-cabin, which, to our gratification, was graced by the presence of some of the fairer portion of our fellow-voyagers, whose appearance was to be attributed to the late desirable change. At the conclusion of the banquet, and after the usual toast of 'absent friends' had been done justice to, Captain Soanso begged to propose as the next one, 'Our friend the governor.' This was also duly responded to by some, under the impression that it referred to their mutual friend at Madras, and by others in happy unconsciousness as to whom the honour was intended for.

'That you may not be under an erroneous impression,' said the captain, 'I must inform you that the social position of *my* governor is neither so high, nor his seat of government so distant as the personage you imagine.'

'Who is he then?' inquired Major-general Mango, leisurely sipping his glass of port. 'I thought you intended the compliment for my friend Sir Harry.'

'By no means, general,' replied the commander; 'I have not the honour of so distinguished an acquaintance. But to satisfy your curiosity, I may as well tell you that we are now steering a direct course for my old friend's seat of government, which is about 150 miles distant; and if the wind stands, I hope, in the course of to-morrow morning, to have the pleasure of introducing you all to Corporal Glass, the governor of the island of Tristan d'Acunha.'

'Dear me, how delightful!' exclaimed several of the ladies, excited at the bare prospect of even a temporary relief to the dreary monotony of their daily existence. 'Do, pray, Captain Soanso, tell us all about him. Is he a real Robinson Crusoe?'

'Almost,' replied the captain, who, in obedience to his fair friends' request, then proceeded: 'Tristan d'Acunha, Nightingale, and Inaccessible Islands, form a group at about an equal distance of thirty miles from each other, and 1500 miles from the Cape. The two latter are desolate; the former inhabited by a few English, whose advent and subsequent career have quite an air of romance.

'Whilst Napoleon Bonaparte was a prisoner in St Helena, the British government imagining that the French might occupy Tristan d'Acunha, as an intermediate point of communication with that island, determined on frustrating any such intention, by sending a detachment of soldiers from the Cape to garrison the island. When all fear of the escape of Bonaparte was at an end, the men were withdrawn; but several of them, including Glass, who had obtained his discharge, had become so much attached to their island-home, that they begged permission to return to it, and provide for their families, by cultivating good ground without paying rent, and occasionally going out to sea after seals and sea-elephants, and exchanging the skins and oil thus obtained for necessaries, with passing ships. Permission being granted, they soon afterwards sailed for their destination, being, by the kindness of their officer, plentifully supplied with all sorts of seed and different kinds of stock wherewith to commence their new undertaking.

'Soon after their arrival at the island, an event occurred which caused the utmost excitement amongst the colonists, and for a time had the effect of considerably increasing their limited society. It was this. One November morning, in the year 1821, a strange-looking craft, of indescribable rig, was observed standing in towards the island. No one could make her out. What could she be? where from? whither bound? severally exclaimed the astonished gazers as the boxlike-looking affair slowly and wearily approached their shores. To be in readiness to have the problem solved, and receive the strangers with the hearty welcome their evident state of exhaustion required, Glass and his companions proceeded to the landing-place, where the distressed mariners soon afterwards arrived. On landing, their tale was soon told. They proved to be a portion of the crew of the *Blenden Hall*, East Indiaman, which had been recently lost on Inaccessible Island during one of those fogs that are so prevalent round its inhospitable shores. The greater portion of her crew and passengers still remained on the island, obtaining a precarious subsistence from the flesh of sea-elephants, seals, penguins, and their eggs, the island being destitute of anything else, with the exception of a small supply of brushwood for firing. Two months after their shipwreck, a boat, or rather a case, was formed of the planks of the wreck, for the purpose of going to Tristan d'Acunha to obtain assistance. Six of the crew embarked in her, but were never heard of afterwards. A second boat of a similar description was then built, which, as it will have been seen, was more fortunate in the perilous undertaking, and arrived safely at Tristan d'Acunha after a weary and dangerous pull of thirty miles.

'On hearing the foregoing account, Glass gallantly determined to effect the rescue of the forlorn party, and without delay launched two of his whale-boats, and with a good supply of bread, butter, milk, and other necessaries, started with his companions on their humane expedition. After three trips, in which they ran the greatest danger of being swamped or blown away to sea, Glass had the satisfaction of bringing off the whole party, and landing them in his sea-girt home, where they received the utmost attention during the remainder of their stay. Here the united community assisted at the marriage of one of the seamen of the *Blenden Hall* with a young maid-servant of one of the passengers, who determined on remaining on the island and sharing the fortunes of its governor.

'For several years after this occurrence, nothing worthy of note disturbed the monotonous quiet of their lives. Their families increased, and their stock throve and multiplied. They generally have a good supply of corn when the harvest turns out favourably, and an abundance of very large and fine potatoes. For a supply of clothes and many other necessaries, the islanders are entirely dependent on passing ships. So you may imagine, ladies and gentlemen,' continued the captain, 'with what joy an Indiaman full of passengers is welcomed in that distant part of her majesty's dominions, and how thankfully the most trifling gift is appreciated by these worthy people.'

Captain Soanso having brought his narrative to a close, the dinner-party soon afterwards dispersed, profoundly impressed with the necessity of a cordial co-operation with our gallant host in his kindly plans for ameliorating the somewhat desolate condition of the poor islanders.

Great was the commotion when the captain's intention became publicly known. The news flew through the ship like wild-fire. Nowhere was the excitement more intense than in the midshipmen's berth, and on no one had the intelligence a more surprising effect than on Bobstay, our junior youngster, who, *having* formed a romantic attachment for Elizabeth, the pretty lady's-maid, as a matter of course proposed an elopement to the land of the free, which, however, was most prudently negatived by the fair lady herself.

'Eight bells, there: come, bear a hand; and turn out, Harry—there's land ahead!' sung out one of my messmates the next morning at the early hour of four.

Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, one jump from my hammock landed me on deck; a second, into my blanket-trousers; and a third, up the main-ladder to the upper-deck, where the tall conical form of the island of Tristan d'Acunha—rising some 800 feet above the level of the sea—could be plainly seen, looming like some monster phantom through the cold gray of the early morning light. During the night, the wind had considerably decreased, and the ship was running down towards the island under all plain sail. As the hours flew by, and the sun rose, and shone on the then tranquil and glittering sea, the scene was one of the most intense interest; and as we lessened our distance, the markings of the island became more and more distinct. Perpendicular cliffs, burned gray and red by an extinct volcano, rose to an immense height above the sea, and then inclined inwards, covered with wood; only to rise again bare and sloping to the apex of the mountain, which was capped with a cloud as white as the snow beneath. Innumerable sea-birds, from the little petrel to the stately albatross, floated round the summits of the lofty cliffs; the huge wings of the latter apparently motionless, yet swift as the 'arrow's flight,' as the bird glided through the aërial space towards its wild retreat in the inaccessible crevices of the rocks of the island.

As we rapidly advanced on our course, we could plainly see, by the aid of our glasses, numerous seals and sea-otters basking and playing on the ledges of rocks at the base of the cliffs, where, in close contiguity, gamboled those shapeless masses, with almost human faces, known as sea-elephants. It was an exciting scene, and everybody was on deck enjoying the pleasant change attendant on a smooth sea and fine weather. Passengers were everywhere busy with their Dollonds, and asking innumerable questions of those who had previously visited the locality, the replies being scarcely heeded, as fresh novelties came crowding one after another.

Presently, a wreath of smoke was seen rising from a point of low land, and floating away in wreathy volumes to leeward.

'There goes the bonfire!' exclaimed the captain. 'We shall soon see the island-boat coming out from the land.'

'Do they usually make this kind of signal?' inquired one of the passengers.

'Invariably,' replied the captain. 'Whenever a vessel heaves in sight, the islanders are always on the alert; and to attract attention, whenever a ship is near enough to see it, they set fire to a large heap of brushwood, constantly kept in readiness for the purpose.'

'Here comes the boat!' exclaimed several voices, as a handsome whale-boat, manned with four sturdy rowers, was observed dashing out from the land, and pulling rapidly in the direction of the ship.

'Round her to, and shorten sail, Mr Bowline: we will not venture in any further,' said the commander, as we opened the point, on which was proudly waving the Union-jack, and saw the white surf rolling in on the landing-place, though it was comparatively calm outside.

As the ship came up sluggishly in the wind, dragging through the dense mass of sea-weed that surrounds the island, she quickly felt its force, which was not so perceptible while running. Sail was then reduced to the top-sails, jib, and spanker, for the weather round these islands is dangerous and deceitful in the extreme. At one moment, a ship may be sailing with scarcely enough of wind to fill her sails; and the next, a puff will come down the mountain, and carry everything by the board, unless precaution be taken in time. During our visit, the wind happened to be light while we lay-to off the island, and the barometer was very high; but we had scarcely left it, when a gale came on suddenly from the northward, with the usual accompaniments of a heavy sea and thick rainy weather.

In the meanwhile, the state-barge for the nonce, containing the governor, came alongside. On reaching the quarter-deck, both himself and comrades were received with a hearty welcome by every one who had the pleasure of a personal introduction. Glass was a stout, hearty-looking man, and appeared rejoiced to see us. Through the liberality of the passengers, he was presented with a good stock of clothes, blankets, and books, our kind-hearted captain adding a fine calf, and various sorts of grain for seed, besides other stores too numerous to mention. It appeared on inquiry that a large increase in the population had taken place since the captain's last visit; the number now amounting to forty-one, exclusive of the governor's son, who was absent on his travels.

The interchange of presents having taken place—that from the island being a magnificent pig, one of the numerous wild ones that luxuriate along its weed-bound shores, a leg of which, by the by, fell to the share of our hungry mess—an expedition to the shore was determined on, which, with the exception of the ladies, was accompanied by the whole of the passengers.

Under the skilful pilotage of the governor in person, a rather fatiguing pull through the mass of tangled sea-weed soon brought the party to Falmouth Bay, where a landing was effected without difficulty. Ours being the first Indiaman that had called at the island for four years, the advent of so large a party caused considerable bustle amongst the delighted inhabitants, especially when it became known that a public ceremony, unprecedented in the annals of that solitary and distant spot, was about to take place.

After a pleasant stroll through the settlement, where every house was open with the most lavish hospitality, and a minute inspection of the live-stock, which amounted to fifty head of cattle, nearly a hundred sheep, besides pigs and poultry *ad infinitum*, the inhabitants were assembled in the presence of one of the passengers, who, being a clergyman, took advantage of the opportunity to baptise twenty individuals of both sexes, from the infant of a few months old to the youth of eighteen. After an impressive address, which was listened to with great attention, a baptismal register was made out, and delivered to Glass, as a lasting memorial of this important era in the uneventful history of these primitive people, the younger portion of whom had never even seen a clergyman before.

At the close of the service, as if in honour of the occasion, the boom of a gun from our gallant ship was borne across the water. From the lowering appearance of the distant horizon, we were not very far wrong in interpreting it as a signal from Mr Bowline, who was evidently getting impatient at the delay. Even the old craft herself appeared to sympathise with her chief officer, and as if in deprecation of the danger of a more protracted stay in that wild locality, anticipated her departure by a series of low courtesies in a long farewell to its iron-bound coasts. Accordingly, shortly afterwards, the party embarked, and after a lengthened farewell, left their new-made friends to their pristine solitude. And with a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, the little flotilla struck out for its destination, which it reached in safety shortly afterwards. A quarter of an hour elapsed, and the old craft was staggering along under as much sail as she could carry to a freshening gale, which soon carried her far from our friend the governor and his lonely isle.

HOW TO FILL YOUR BASKET.

How? Why, there are many ways.

The editor, for instance, as he sits at his desk poring over the voluminous manuscripts kindly proffered to him by aspiring poets, novelists, or moralists, discriminates between the suitable and unsuitable; and the result is, that the former are placed in the printer's hands, while the latter, if not returned, get into basket.

How? The rag-picker could answer the question, by informing us that *his* only chance is to be astir before the busy world has doffed its night-cap, that he may pick his rags in peace, and be sure to fill his basket.

The basket we allude to at present, however, is the *angler's* basket. Angling was a mania of ours in the olden time, and we laughed in our sleeve at those of our brethren who were content with a creel of medium size. We equipped ourselves likewise with flies of every hue, bait-hooks of every size, rods of the most ingenious workmanship, and we would not like to say how many spare tops; pocket-books with elaborate interiors, capable of containing tackle for a ten years' residence in Norway, pirns, lines, and gut exhaustless; and with some dozen casts—each fly differing from its neighbour—wound round our white beaver; and so we would take our journey northward, inwardly resolved to leave an immortal line of glory behind us wherever our piscatorial steps should stray. Strange, however, our success was never commensurate with our preparations; we had miscalculated the season, taken the river at its worst time, were harassed by others pertinaciously whipping the water a hundred yards further down the stream, or had failed to strike the precise infinitesimal degree of shade of the flies on the water that day. We never failed, in short, to find an ingenious excuse; and as we drew in our chair towards the fire in the snug parlour of the 'Gordon Arms,' to describe our sport to others of a similar persuasion, we blessed those never-failing apologies—thunder in the air, white clouds, and the clearness of the water. 'If,' exclaimed we, 'those white clouds had but cleared off, how gloriously must the fine half-pounders have risen to our "Professors!"'

Angling having been, as we said, a mania of ours, well do we remember how tedious was the month of April, and how often, whilst busied in our dusky counting-house in the city, recollections of that glorious week in May last year would come over us; how often, too, we permitted the thrilling anticipation of our week's holiday in the north, not *yet* enjoyed, to blend with our anxieties respecting the money-market, or dealings in the Corn Exchange!

May arrived; we bade, alas! too short an adieu to our companionable ledgers and cash-books; and year after year, about the beginning of May, we were the envy of our brother-clerks for a whole fortnight.

We *now* find that nothing but—we must out with it—*sheer ignorance* was the reason why we never filled our basket! And we have lately received a complete solution of the why and wherefore: the truth is, that the generality of man was, up to the year 1857, devoid of the true secret of filling his basket with—trout!

Thanks to Mr Stewart, we have now before us a neat, handy little three-and-sixpenny volume, *The Practical Angler, or the Art of Trout-fishing, more Particularly Applied to Clear Water*,* containing certain hints and rules, which, had we known them when sojourning at the 'Gordon Arms' in *those days*, must, we are positive, have lent us the power of filling even *our* large basket, and saved us from resorting to the apologies of 'thunder in the air' and 'clear water!'

But it is our firm belief that neither we, nor any one else, ever dreamed of the possibility of killing fifteen or twenty pounds' weight of trout per diem, in a clear running stream. As for ourselves, we might fish ever so assiduously, and follow the course of the river for miles, casting our large gaudy flies far out on the stream, and following their motions with eager eye, without catching more than a couple of dozen by dinner-time. But then we erred in fishing *down*, since our intended prey is always looking *up;* we erred in using large gaudy flies; we erred in casting a *long* line. Mr Stewart's long and careful experience has taught him, and he has taught us, that we should have fished up instead of down; that our large gaudy flies ought to have been left behind us in the 'Golden Perch,' and small, sparely dressed ones used instead. He further informs us, and we feel intuitively that he is correct, that the speckled tenants of Yarrow or Tweed would have been lured, in spite of their teeth, towards a wood-cock wing with a single turn of a red hackle, dressed with yellow silk; that an able supporter would have been found in a hare-lug body, with a corn-bunting or chaffinch wing, and several other equally killing flies which he describes. Our authority, for we may swear by him, also places side by side with those the black spider, the red spider, and the dun spider!

Here is food for the fishes, simply prepared, without show, and tied on to *thin* and transparent gut; and there at present lie in our reasonably sized pocket-book—our last purchase—half-a-dozen of each of the above, dubbed by the hands of the Practical Angler himself, and presented to us along with his book.

We now see clearly, where all was mystery before, why we lost so many trout—and we were always sure they were the largest—when angling in the Tweed. We were somewhat proud in those days of our dexterity in throwing a long line, and of our management of a sixteen-feet rod; but now our pride has had a sad fall, since we learn that by the use of a short ten-feet rod, moderately stiff, with a short line, we might have doubled, perhaps quadrupled, our 'take;' and joined to this, had we but fished *up*, used the wood-cock-wings, dotterel-wings, or black and dun spiders, keeping all the while *out of sight* of our wary prey, what a pleasing load might we not have borne to the Gordon Arms—how patronisingly we should have cheered our less successful brethren—what glorious accounts imparted to our holiday-looking-forward-to brother-clerks in the city!

Let not the reader imagine from the foregoing that our hero's forte lies in fly-fishing alone, or that he has tested his skill upon one or two streams at the most; our angling friends have only to refer to his little book to find that he has made observations from many a stream and loch; that he has gained also useful hints from the most successful professional and amateur fishers of the day, and that he has not failed to turn them to account for the benefit of the angling world. His experience has taught him that successful anglers have ever been *keen observers.* We never were keen observers in the days we have alluded to, but are now willing and ready to add as much as we can of that indispensable to the other qualities of an angler—namely, quickness of eye, energy, and boundless perseverance; so that we may hope some fine day to come home, as well as Mr Stewart, with our fifteen dozen and our basket full.

We will not dwell longer upon this, a favourite theme, but will take the opportunity of remarking, that when our friends have carefully perused *The Practical Angler*, and after that, whether they take the train to the north or to the south, it will be their own fault if they do not know how to fill their basket.

We shall conclude with an extract shewing the practical style in which this little work is written; and that the extract may be universally useful, it shall contain a complete angler's calendar, beginning with the present month: 'In the beginning of May it is of little use starting before eight o'clock in the morning, as the weather is generally cold; if the weather is warm, however, trout will take an hour or two earlier. When the waters are clear, the angler should commence with the creeper, and continue using it till he sees the take has commenced, when he should at once change to the fly, and make the most of his time. At this season, the take lasts longer than at any other, and if the day is favourable, the angler may kill the required quantity in a few hours in the forenoon. During the afternoon—that is to say, from two or three o'clock till six or seven—the minnow will frequently be found the best; and a very good plan is to fish up with the creeper and fly, and then back over the same ground with the minnow. If neither the creeper, fly, nor minnow will take, recourse must be had to the worm; but this is rarely the case; and unless on the occasion of a full flood, the angler may never have occasion to use the worm till the end of June. When the waters are in full flood, recourse must be had to the worm; and when they are rising, or again falling, from the time that the particles of the mud begin to subside, until the waters become of a dark porter colour, the minnow will be found very deadly. The worm and the minnow should be used the whole season through when the waters are in the states just mentioned; but when they become of a dark porter colour, the lures appropriate to the season come into play, and in May, in such a case, reliance can always be placed upon the fly.

'About the middle of the month, the May-fly makes its appearance, and with it the angler will have no difficulty in filling his basket. In streams where the May-fly is not to be had, the angler should use worm and minnow in the morning; and whenever he observes the trout rising at the natural insect, change to the fly. The minnow will again be found effective in the evening. Even in streams where May-flies abound, minnow or worm will sometimes take better than they do early in the morning; and if the weather is very dark and stormy, the minnow will frequently be found most effective all day.

'When the May-flies have been two or three weeks on the water, or about the middle of June, they are not to be found in such numbers; the trout also do not take them so readily, and filling even a twelve-pound basket becomes rather difficult. The trout have given up taking fly readily, and have not yet begun to take worm; they appear to be resting after the high feeding they have enjoyed for the last six weeks. Loch-fishing being now in its prime, the angler would do well to give it a trial, as he will not lose much by a ten days' absence from the rivers. In these, the worm and minnow in the morning, the fly in the forenoon, and the minnow and fly in the evening, will be found the best means of filling a basket; and in small waters and hill-burns, trout will now take the worm readily.

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* A. & C. Black, Edinburgh. 1857.

'From the middle to the end of June, worm-fishing commences; and from this period to the end of July large basketsful of trout may be depended upon, no matter what the state of weather or water. A good arrangement for a day's trouting at this season is to start very early in the morning—the earlier the better—and fish down a few miles with the minnow, and then fish back again with the worm; or if the angler has not the gift of early rising, he may start about breakfast-time, taking his dinner with him, and fish up with the worm, and down again with the minnow in the evening. If the weather is dark and stormy, the minnow will frequently be found most deadly during the whole day.

'About the beginning of August, another change begins to take place in the inclinations of the trout. Unless the weather is showery, or particularly favourable, they will not take the worm readily; and frequently only take it for an hour or so in the heat of the day. There is also a visible falling off in the size of the trout caught with it—a sure sign with any kind of fishing that it is approaching a termination. Nor will the minnow, unless the streams are swollen, aid the angler in his emergency; there is nothing for it but to have recourse to the more backward districts and smaller waters.

'About the end of August, trout begin to take the fly freely, and continue doing so all through September; and reliance can generally be placed upon it, particularly in coloured water: should it fail, recourse must be had to some hill-burn, where the worm will always be found effective.

'By the beginning of October, all the spawning trout are out of condition; the small ones, however, which do not spawn, afford very good diversion until far on in the month, by which time even they are quite unworthy of the attention of the sportsman.'

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXIV.—A LILLIPUTIAN FOREST.

On resuming the trail, I moved with lighter spirit. I had three sources of gratulation. The peril of the flood was past—she was not drowned. The wolves were thrown off—the dangerous rapid had deterred them; on the other side their footprints were no longer found. Thirdly, the steed had slackened his pace. After climbing the bank, he had set off in a rapid gait, but not at a gallop.

'He's been pacin' hyar!' remarked Garey, as soon as his eyes rested upon the tracks.

'Pacing?'

I knew what was meant by this; I knew that gait peculiar to the prairie-horse, fast but smooth as the amble of a palfrey. His rider would scarcely perceive the gentle movement; her torture would be less.

Perhaps, too, no longer frighted by the fierce pursuers, the horse would come to a stop. His wearied limbs would admonish him, and then—— Surely he could not have gone much further?

We too were wearied, one and all; but these pleasing conjectures beguiled us from thinking of our toil, and we advanced more cheerfully along the trail.

Alas! it was my fate to be the victim of alternate hopes and fears. My new-sprung joy was short-lived, and fast fleeted away.

We had gone but a few hundred paces from the river, when we encountered an obstacle, that proved not only a serious barrier to our progress, but almost brought our tracking to a termination.

This obstacle was a forest of oaks, not *giant* oaks, as these famed trees are usually designated, but the very reverse—a forest of *dwarf* oaks (*Quercus nana*). Far as the eye could reach extended this singular wood, in which no tree rose above thirty inches in height! Yet was it no thicket—no under-growth of shrubs—but a true forest of oaks, each tree having its separate stem, its boughs, its lobed leaves, and its bunches of brown acorns.

'Shin oak,' cried the trappers, as we entered the verge of this miniature forest.

'Wagh!' exclaimed Rube, in a tone of impatience, 'hyur's bother. 'Ee may all get out o' yur saddles an rest yur critters: we'll hev to crawl hyur.'

And so it resulted. For long weary hours we followed the trail, going not faster than we could have crawled upon our hands and knees. The tracks of the steed were plain enough, and in daylight could have been easily followed; but the little oaks grew close and regular as if planted by the hand of man; and through their thick foliage the moonlight scarcely penetrated. Their boughs almost touched each other, so that the whole surface lay in dark shadow, rendering it almost impossible to make out the hoof-prints. Here and there, a broken branch or a bunch of tossed leaves—their under-sides shining glaucous in the moonlight—enabled us to advance at a quicker rate; but as the horse had passed gently over the ground, these 'signs' were few and far between.

For long fretful hours, we toiled through the 'shin-oak' forest, our heads far overtopping its tallest trees! We might have fancied that we were threading our way through some extended nursery. The trail led directly across its central part; and ere we had reached its furthest verge, the moon's rays were mingling with the purple light of morning.

Soon after the 'forest opened;' the little dwarfs grew further apart—here scattered thinly over the ground, there disposed in clumps or miniature groves—until at length the sward of the prairie predominated.

The trouble of the trackers was at an end. The welcome light of the sun was thrown upon the trail, so that they could lift it as fast as we could ride; and, no longer hindered by brake or bush, we advanced at a rapid rate across the prairie.

Over this ground the steed had also passed rapidly. He had continued to pace for some distance, after emerging from the shin-oak forest; but all at once, as we could tell by his tracks, he had bounded off again, and resumed his headlong gallop.

What had started him afresh? We were at a loss to imagine; even the prairie-men were puzzled.

Had wolves again attacked him, or some other enemy? No; nor one nor other. It was a green prairie over which he had gone, a smooth sward of mezquite-grass; but there were spots where the growth was thin—patches nearly bare—and these were softened by the rain. Even the light paw of a wolf would have impressed itself in such places, sufficiently to be detected by the lynx-eyed men of the plains. The horse had passed since the rain had ceased falling. No wolf, or other animal, had been after him.

Perhaps he had taken a start of himself, freshly affrighted at the novel mode in which he was ridden—still under excitement from the rough usage he had received, and from which he had not yet cooled down; perhaps the barbed points of the cohetes rankled in his flesh, acting like spurs; perhaps some distant sound had led him to fancy the hooting mob, or the howling wolves, still coming at his heels; perhaps——

An exclamation from the trackers, who were riding in the advance, put an end to these conjectures. Both had pulled up, and were pointing to the ground. No words were spoken—none needed. We all read with our eyes an explanation of the renewed gallop.

Directly in front of us, the sward was cut and scored by numerous tracks. Not four, but four hundred hoof-prints were indented in the turf—all of them fresh as the trail we were following—and amidst these the tracks of the steed, becoming intermingled, were lost to our view.

'A drove of wild-horses,' pronounced the guides at a glance. They were the tracks of unshod hoofs, though that would scarcely have proved them wild. An Indian troop might have ridden past without leaving any other sign; but these horses had not been mounted, as the trappers confidently alleged; and among them were the hoof-marks of foals and half-grown colts, which proved the drove to be a *caballada* of mustangs.

At the point where we first struck their tracks they had been going in full speed, and the trail of the steed converged until it closed with theirs at an acute angle.

'Ye-es,' drawled Rube, 'I see how 'tis. They've been skeeart at the awkurd look o' the hoss, an hev put off. See! thur's his tracks on the top o' all o' theirn: he's been runnin arter 'em. Thur!' continued the tracker, as we advanced—'thur he hez overtuk some o' 'em. See! thur! the varmints hev scattered right an left! Hyur agin, they've galliped thegither, some ahint, an some afore him. Wagh! I guess they know him now, an ain't any more afeerd o' him. See thur! he's in the thick o' the drove.'

Involuntarily I raised my eyes, fancying from these words that the horses were in sight; but no; the speaker was riding forward, leaning over in his saddle, with look fixed upon the ground. All that he had spoken he had been reading from the surface of the prairie—from hieroglyphics to me unintelligible, but to him more easily interpreted than the page of a printed book.

I knew that what he was saying was true. The steed had galloped after a drove of wild-horses; he had overtaken them; and at the point where we now were, had been passing along in their midst!

Dark thoughts came crowding into my mind at this discovery—another shadow across my heart. I perceived at once a new situation of peril for my betrothed—new, and strange, and awful.

I saw her in the midst of a troop of neighing wild-horses—stallions with fiery eyes and red steaming nostrils; these perhaps angry at the white steed, and jealous of his approach to the *manada;* in mad rage rushing upon him with open mouth and yellow glistening teeth; rearing around and above him, and striking down with deadly desperate hoof—— O it was a horrid apprehension, a fearful fancy!

Yet, fearful as it was, it proved to be the exact shadow of a reality. As the mirage refracts distant objects upon the retina of the eye, so some spiritual mirage must have thrown upon my mind the image of things that were real. Not distant, though then unseen—not distant was the real. Rapidly I ascended another swell of the prairie, and from its crest beheld almost the counterpart of the terrible scene that my imagination had conjured up!

Was it a dream? was it still fancy that was cheating my eyes? No; there was the wild-horse drove; there the rearing, screaming stallions; there the white steed in their midst—he too rearing erect—there upon his back——

'O God! look down in mercy—save her! save her!'

CHAPTER LXV.

SCATTERING THE WILD STALLIONS.

Such rude appeal was wrung from my lips by the dread spectacle on which my eyes rested.

I scarcely waited the echo of my words; I waited not the counsel of my comrades, but, plunging deeply the spur, galloped down the hill in the direction of the drove.

There was no method observed, no attempt to keep under cover. There was not time either for caution or concealment. I acted under instantaneous impulse, and with but one thought—to charge forward, scatter the stallions, and, if yet in time, save her from those hurling heels and fierce glittering teeth.

If yet in time—ay, such provisory parenthesis was in my mind at the moment. But I drew hope from observing that the steed kept a ring cleared around him: his assailants only threatened at a distance.

Had he been alone, I might have acted with more caution, and perhaps have thought of some stratagem to capture him. As it was, stratagem was out of the question; the circumstances required speed.

Both trappers and rangers, acting under like impulse with myself, had spurred their horses into a gallop, and followed close at my heels.

The drove was yet distant. The wind blew from them—a brisk breeze. We were half-way down the hill, and still the wild-horses neither heard, saw, nor scented us.

I shouted at the top of my voice: I wished to startle and put them to flight. My followers shouted in chorus; but our voices reached not the quarrelling caballada.

A better expedient suggested itself: I drew my pistol from its holster, and fired several shots in the air.

The first would have been sufficient. Its report was heard, despite the opposing wind; and the mustangs, affrighted by the sound, suddenly forsook the encounter. Some bounded away at once; others came wheeling around us, snorting fiercely, and tossing their heads in the air; a few galloped almost within range of our rifles, and then uttering their shrill neighing, turned and broke off in rapid flight. The steed and his rider alone remained, where we had first observed them!

For some moments he kept the ground, as if bewildered by the sudden scattering of his assailants; but he too must have heard the shots, and perhaps alone divined something of what had caused those singular noises. In the loud concussion, he recognised the voice of his greatest enemy; and yet he stirred not from the spot!

Was he going to await our approach? Had he become tamed?—reconciled to captivity? or was it that we had rescued him from his angry rivals—that he was grateful, and no longer feared us?

Such odd ideas rushed rapidly through my mind as I hurried forward. I had begun to deem it probable that he would stay our approach, and suffer us quietly to recapture him. Alas! I was soon undeceived. I was still a long way off—many hundred yards—when I saw him rear upward, wheel round upon his hind-feet as on a pivot, and then bound off in determined flight. His shrill scream pealing back upon the breeze, fell upon my ears like the taunt of some deadly foe. It seemed the utterance of mockery and revenge: mockery at the impotence of my pursuit; revenge that I had once made him my captive.

I obeyed the only impulse I could have at such a moment, and galloped after, as fast as my horse could go. I stayed for no consultation with my companions; I had already forged far ahead of them. They were too distant for speech.

I needed not their wisdom to guide me. No plan required conception or deliberation; the course was clear: by speed only could the horse be taken, and his rider saved from destruction—*if yet safe.*

O the fearfulness of the last reflection! the agony of the doubt!

It was not the hour to indulge in idle anguish; I repressed the emotion, and bent myself earnestly upon the pursuit. I spoke to my brave steed, addressing him by name; I urged him with hands and knees; only at intervals did I inflict the cruel steel upon his ribs.

I soon perceived that he was flagging; I perceived it with increased apprehension for the result. He had worn his saddle too long on the day before, and the wet weary night had jaded him. He had been overwrought, and I felt his weariness, as he galloped with feebler stroke. The prairie-steed must have been fresh in comparison.

But life and death were upon the issue. Her life—perhaps my own. I cared not to survive her. She must be saved. The spur must be plied without remorse: the steed must be overtaken, even if Moro should die!

It was a rolling prairie over which the chase led—a surface that undulated like the billows of the ocean. We galloped transversely to the direction of the 'swells,' that rose one after the other in rapid succession. Perhaps the rapidity with which we were crossing them brought them *nearer* to each other. To me there appeared no level ground between these land-billows. Up hill and down hill in quick alternation was the manner of our progress—a severe trial upon the girths—a hard killing gallop for my poor horse. But life and death were upon the issue, and the spur must be plied without remorse.

A long cruel gallop—would it never come to an end? would the steed never tire? would he never stop? Surely in time he must become weary? Surely Moro was his equal in strength as in speed?—superior to him in both?

Ah! the prairie-horse possessed a double advantage—he had started fresh—he was on his native ground.

I kept my eyes fixed upon him; not for one moment did I withdraw my glance. A mysterious apprehension was upon me; I feared to look around, lest he should disappear. The souvenirs of the former chase still haunted me; weird remembrances clung to my spirit. I was once more in the region of the supernatural.

I looked neither to the right nor left, but straight before me—straight at the object of my pursuit, and the distance that lay between us. This last I continuously scanned, now with fresh hope, and now again with doubt. It seemed to vary with the ground. At one time, I was nearer, as the descending slope gave me the advantage; but the moment after, the steep declivity retarded the speed of my horse, and increased the intervening distance.

It was with joy I crossed the last swell of the rolling prairie, and beheld a level plain stretching before us. It was with joy I perceived that upon the new ground I was rapidly gaining upon the steed!

And rapidly I continued to gain upon him, until scarcely three hundred yards were between us. So near was I, that I could trace the outlines of *her* form—her prostrate limbs—still lashed to the croup—her garments loose and torn—her ankles—her long dark hair dishevelled and trailing to the ground—even her pallid cheek I could perceive, as at intervals the steed tossed back his head to utter his wild taunting neigh.

I was near enough to be heard. I shouted in my loudest voice; I called her by name. I kept my eyes upon her, and with throbbing anxiety listened for a response. I fancied that her head was raised, as though she understood and would have answered me. I could hear no voice, but her feeble cry might have been drowned by the clatter of the hooves.

Again I called aloud—again and again pronouncing her name.

Surely I heard a cry; surely her head was raised from the withers of the horse. I could not be mistaken.

'Thank Heaven, she lives!'

I had scarcely uttered the prayer, when I felt my steed yield beneath me as though he was sinking into the bosom of the earth. I was hurled out of the saddle, and flung head-foremost upon the plain. My horse had broken through the burrow of the prairie marmot, and the false step had brought him with violence to the ground.

I was neither stunned nor entangled by the fall; and in a few seconds had regained my feet, my bridle, and saddle. But as I headed my horse once more toward the chase, the white steed and his rider had passed out of sight.

CHAPTER LXVI.

LOST IN A CHAPPARAL.

I was chagrined, frantic, and despairing, but not surprised. This time there was no mystery about the disappearance of the steed; the chapparal explained it. Though I no longer saw him, he was yet within hearing. His footfall on the firm ground, the occasional snapping of a dead stick, the whisk of the recoiling branches, all reached my ears as I was remounting.

These sounds guided me, and without staying to follow his tracks, I dashed forward to the edge of the chapparal—at the point nearest to where I heard him moving. I did not pause to look for an opening, but heading in the direction whence came the sounds, I spurred forward into the thicket. Breasting the bushes that reached around his neck, or bounding over them, my brave horse pressed on; but he had not gone three lengths of himself before I recognised the imprudence of the course I was pursuing: I now saw I should have *followed the tracks.*

I no longer heard the movements of the steed—neither foot-stroke, nor snapping sticks, nor breaking branches. The noise made by my own horse, amid the crackling acacias, drowned every other sound; and so long as I kept in motion, I moved with uncertainty. It was only when I made stop that I could again hear the chase struggling through the thicket; but now the sounds were faint and far distant—growing still fainter as I listened.

Once more I urged forward my horse, heading him almost at random; but I had not advanced a hundred paces, before the misery of uncertainty again impelled me to halt.

This time I listened and heard nothing—not even the recoil of a bough. The steed had either stopped, and was standing silent, or, what was more probable, had gained so far in advance of me that his hoof-stroke was out of hearing.

Half frantic, angered at myself, too much excited for cool reflection, I lanced the sides of my horse, and galloped madly through the thicket.

I rode several hundred yards before drawing bridle, in a sort of desperate hope I might once more bring myself within earshot of the chase.

Again I halted to listen. My recklessness proved of no avail. Not a sound reached my ear: even had there been sounds, I should scarcely have heard them above that issuing from the nostrils of my panting horse; but sound there was none. Silent was the chapparal around me—silent as death; not even a bird moved among its branches.

I felt something like self-execration: my imprudence I denounced over and over. But for my rash haste, I might yet have been upon the trail—perhaps within sight of the object of pursuit. Where the steed had gone, surely I could have followed. Now he was gone I knew not whither—lost—his trail lost—all lost!

To recover the trace of him, I made several casts across the thicket. I rode first in one direction, then in another, but all to no purpose. I could find neither hoof-track nor broken branch.

I next bethought me of returning to the open prairie, there retaking the trail, and following it thence. This was clearly the wisest, in fact, the only course in which there was reason. I should easily recover the trail, at the point where the horse had entered the chapparal, and thence I might follow it without difficulty.

I turned my horse round, and headed him in the direction of the prairie—or rather in what I supposed to be the direction—for this too had become conjecture.

It was not till I had ridden for a half-hour, for more than a mile through glade and bush—not till I had ridden nearly twice as far in the opposite direction—and then to right, and then to left—that I pulled up my broken horse, dropped the rein upon his withers, and sat bent in my saddle under the full conviction that I too was lost!

Lost in the chapparal—that parched and hideous jungle, where every plant that carries a thorn seemed to have place. Around grew *acacias*, *mimosas*, *gleditschias*, *robinias*, *algarobias*—all the thorny legumes of the world; above towered the splendid *fouquiera* with spinous stem; there flourished the 'tornillo' (*prosopis glandulosa*), with its twisted beans; there the 'junco' (*koeblerinia*), whose very leaves are thorns. There saw I spear-pointed yuccas and clawed bromelias (*agave* and *dasylirion*); there, too, the universal cactaceæ (*opuntia*, *mammilaria*, *cereus*, and *echinocactus*); even the very grass was thorny—for it was a species of the 'mezquite-grass,' whose knotted culms are armed with sharp spurs!

Through this horrid thicket I had not passed unscathed; my garments were already torn, my limbs were bleeding.

My limbs—and hers?

Of hers alone was I thinking: those fair-proportioned members—those softly rounded arms—that smooth delicate skin—bosom and shoulders bare—the thorn—the scratch—the tear. Oh! it was agony to think!

By action alone might I hope to still my emotions; and once more rousing myself from the lethargy of painful thought, I urged my steed onward through the bushes.

CHAPTER LXVII.

ENCOUNTER WITH JAVALI.

I had no mark to guide me, either on the earth or in the heavens. I had an indefinite idea that the chase had led westward, and therefore to get back to the prairie, I ought to head towards the east. But how was I to distinguish east from west? In the chapparal both were alike, and so too upon the sky. No sun was visible; the canopy of heaven was of a uniform leaden colour; upon its face were no signs by which the cardinal points could have been discovered.

Had I been in a forest of trees, surrounded by a northern *sylva*, I could have made out my course. The oak or the elm, the ash-tree or maple, the beech or sycamore—any of them would have been compass sufficient for me; but in that thicket of thorny shrubs I was completely at fault. It was a subtropical flora, or rather a vegetation of the arid desert, to which I was almost a stranger. I knew there were men skilled in the craft of the chapparal, who, in the midst of it, could tell north from south without compass or star. Not I.

I could think of no better mode than to trust to the guidance of my horse. More than once, when lost in the thick forest or on the boundless plain, had I reposed a similar trust in his instincts—more than once had he borne me out of my bewilderment.

But whither could he take me? Back to the path by which we had come? Probably enough, had that path led to a home; but it did not: my poor steed, like myself, had no home. He, too, was a ranger; for years had been flitting from place to place, hundreds, ay, thousands of miles from each other. Long had he forgotten his native stall.

I surmised that if there was water near, his instinct might carry him to that—and much needed it both horse and rider. Should we reach a running stream, it would serve as a guide.

I dropped the rein upon his neck, and left him to his will.

I had already shouted in my loudest voice, in hopes of being heard by my comrades; by none other than them, for what could human being do in such a spot, shunned even by the brute creation? The horned lizard (*agama cornuta*), the ground rattlesnake, the shell-covered armadillo, and the ever-present coyoté, alone inhabit these dry jungles; and now and then the javali (*dicotyles torquatus*), feeding upon the twisted legumes of the 'tornillo,' passes through their midst; but even these are rare; and the traveller may ride for scores of miles through the Mexican chapparal without encountering aught that lives and moves. There reigns the stillness of death. Unless the wind be rustling among the pinnate fronds of the acacias, or the unseen locust utters its harsh shrieking amid the parched herbage, the weary wayfarer may ride on, cheered by no other sound than his own voice, or the footfall of his horse.

There was still the chance that my followers might hear me. I knew that they would not stray from the trail. Though they must have been far behind when I entered the chapparal, following the tracks, they would in time be sure to come up.

It was a question whether they would follow mine, or that of the steed. This had not occurred to me before, and I paused to consider it. If the former, then was I wrong in moving onward, as I should only be going *from* them, and leading them in a longer search. Already had I given them a knot to unravel, my devious path forming a labyrinthine maze.

It was more than probable they would follow *me*—in the belief that I had some reason for deviating from the trail of the steed, perhaps for the purpose of heading or intercepting him.

This conjecture decided me against advancing further—at least until some time should elapse, enough to allow them to come up with me.

Out of compassion for my hard-breathing horse, I dismounted. At intervals, I shouted aloud, and fired shots from my pistols: after each I listened; but neither shot nor shout reached me in reply. They must be distant indeed, not to hear the report of fire-arms; for had they heard them, they would have been certain to make answer in a similar manner. All of them carried rifles and pistols.

I began to think it was time they should have reached me. Again I fired several shots; but, as before, echo was the only reply. Perhaps they had *not* followed me? perhaps they had kept on upon the trail of the steed, and it might lead them far away, beyond hearing of the reports? perhaps there was not yet time for them to have arrived?

While thus conjecturing, my ears were assailed by the screeching of birds at some distance off. I recognised the harsh notes of the jay, mingling with the chatter of the red cardinal.

From the tones, I knew that these birds were excited by the presence of some animal. Perhaps they were defending their nests against the black snake or the *crotalus*.

It might be my followers approaching? it might be the steed—like me, still wandering in the chapparal?

I sprang to my saddle to get a better view, and gazed over the tops of the trees. Guided by the voices of the birds, I soon discovered the scene of the commotion. At some distance off, I saw both jays and cardinals fluttering among the branches, evidently excited by something on the ground beneath them. At the same time I heard strange noises, far louder than the voices of the birds, but could not tell what was causing them. My spirits sank, for I knew they could not be produced either by my comrades or the steed.

It was not far, and I determined to satisfy myself as to what was causing such a commotion in this hitherto silent place. I rode towards the spot, as fast as my horse could make way through the bushes. I was soon satisfied.

Coming out on the edge of a little glade, I became spectator to a strange scene—a battle between the red cougar and a band of *javali*.

The fierce little boars were 'ringing' the panther, who was fighting desperately in their midst. Several of them lay upon the ground, struck senseless or dead, by the strong paws of the huge cat; but the others, nothing daunted, had completely surrounded their enemy, and were bounding upon him with open mouths, wounding him with their sharp shining tusks.

The scene aroused my hunter instincts, and suddenly unslinging my rifle, I set my eye to the sights. I had no hesitation about the selection of my mark—the panther, by all means—and drawing trigger, I sent my bullet through the creature's skull, at once stretching him out in the midst of his assailants.

Three seconds had not elapsed, before I had reason to regret the choice I had made of a victim. I should have let the cougar alone, and either held my fire, or directed it upon one of his urchin-like enemies; for the moment he was *hors de combat*, his assailants became mine—transferring their 'surround' to my horse and myself, with all the savage fierceness they had just exhibited towards the panther!

I had no means of punishing the ungrateful brutes. They had not given me time to reload my rifle before commencing the attack, and my pistols were both empty. My horse, startled by the unexpected assault, as well as by the strange creatures that were making it, snorted and plunged wildly over the ground; but go where he would, a score of the ferocious brutes followed, springing against his sides, and scoring his shanks with their terrible tusks. Well for me I was able to keep the saddle; had I been thrown from it at that moment, I should certainly have been torn to pieces.

I saw no hope of safety but in flight, and spurring my horse, I gave him full rein. Alas! through that tangled thicket the javali could go as fast as he; and after galloping a hundred yards or so, I perceived the whole flock still around me, leaping as fiercely as ever around the limbs of my steed.

The result might have proved awkward enough; but at that moment I heard voices, and saw mounted men breaking through the underwood. They were Stanfield, Quackenboss, and the rest of the rangers.

In another second they were on the ground; and their revolvers, playing rapidly, soon thinned the ranks of the javali, and caused the survivors to retreat grunting and screaming into the thicket.

WHAT IS HEROISM?

Every tolerably forward school-boy is familiar with a number of stock anecdotes associated with classical names, and illustrative of the heroic virtues, self-sacrifice and fortitude. Many of these *ana* will scarcely bear criticism in point of authenticity; but it is one of the least grateful duties of the historian to withdraw from the domain of presumed reality those dramatic episodes and tableaux with which the Greek and Roman writers enliven the grammar-school instruction. In our boyish days, we learn to venerate the ancient senators, awaiting in their curule-chairs with dignified gravity the intrusion of uncouth invaders. We garner up in our memories the gallantry of Curtius and Cocles, the patriotic integrity of Regulus and Cincinnatus; and we are naturally loath to listen to Niebuhr and Arnold, when they assure us that these, our fancy-men, never had existence save in the imaginations of ballad-singers, or the traditions of an unlettered people; or if they really abode in the flesh, never performed the acts attributed to them. Independently of such 'points' in mythic history, there are no doubt many similar incidents which, though ascribed to historical personages, are nevertheless fictitious. Our ancient friends were extremely partial to narratives of this kind, and in default of a sufficiency of authentic facts, supplied themselves with circumstantial *on dits*. These were repeated from mouth to mouth, until they became, like travellers' tales, a part of the popular belief, and obtained admission to the grave pages of the biographer and historian.

The question, however, whether or not these anecdotes, and others of the same class, were records of actual events, is immaterial to my present purpose; it is enough that they have been handed down from generation to generation, from the old civilisation to the new, and have challenged and received more or less admiration and applause. They picture to us the kind of heroism most in esteem amongst the ancients, and not without honour in later days. Leonidas and his three hundred; Aristides inscribing his own name on the ostracising shell of an illiterate citizen; Arria, by her own death, encouraging her husband to brave a similar fate; the elder Brutus, with a severe justice, scarcely enough tempered with mercy, condemning his own son to death for a trifling breach of military discipline, are instances of the kind to which I allude; and we can trace in them all the stoical and dignified behaviour regarded by the men of those days as the height of human virtue.

If we seek further to determine the main elements which gave to these actions their éclat, we shall find them to be an enthusiastic abnegation of self, and a somewhat exaggerated development of a single virtue. The actuating motive, whether patriotism, domestic affection, or a sentiment of honour, prevailed in an unusual degree, raised to the point of enthusiasm by peculiar circumstances of time and place, or peculiar character of mind. It would not be well to detract from the glory or quasi-glory of such exploits, by ascribing them to ignoble motives, or judging them according to the light of an after-age. Every action, however praiseworthy and virtuous in outward seeming, may be accounted for, if we so incline, by consummate hypocrisy, far-sighted selfishness, or immoderate pride. By hypothetical assumptions, we may attribute the public life of Washington to his greed for glory, or of Wilberforce to a puerile love of fame. He must be an intense sceptic in human nature who perversely refers every instance of apparent self-forgetfulness to concealed self-love. I do not, then, doubt that such actions as I have referred to possessed that species of nobleness claimed for them; at all events, it is upon this assumption that they have been recorded as examples of heroism.

In modern times, illustrations of similar virtue are by no means infrequent, but they do not possess that classical sanction which is so powerful for good or ill, and too often elevates a sophism into a wise saw, and an act of dubious morality into a vaunted exemplar. For instance, a modern Scævola is scarcely entitled to approbation. I willingly admit the deserts of these heroes and heroines; nevertheless, a little consideration will shew, that examples of this type do not exhibit the highest forms of moral grandeur. It is obvious at once, that isolated acts, illustrating an impulsive virtue, and occurring at conjunctures of great emergency, are but doubtful guides to general character. The actors in such scenes are not necessarily so exalted or so high-spirited as we are at first likely to imagine. Wholesale experience has lately shewn that the devotion of soldiery is no rare attribute; and in order to create military heroes, we have only to provide a field of action. Neither are the self-sacrifices of affection peculiar to lofty characters. But there is a heroism of a higher kind, which is often not patent to the world, which requires no grand stage and no dramatic incidents to give it lustre.

Charles Lamb tells an instructive story relating to the culinary discovery of roast-pig. John Chinaman found among the ruins of a house destroyed by fire a sucking-pig beautifully cooked in the course of the conflagration. Being enchanted by the succulent dainty, he proceeded to burn down another house containing another sucking-pig. After considerable destruction of valuable property, a sage friend of John Chinaman pointed out that in order to procure burnt pig, it was not at all essential to burn down a house. With regard to heroism, we are apt to fall into the illogical reasoning of the Celestial epicure, and imagine that great crises are necessary to its development. Enthusiastic British youth, moved by the recital of heroic deeds of ancient or modern times, yearn to become performers of similar exploits: they are filled with regret that their surrounding circumstances are commonplace, that they have no Thermopylæ to defend and no Sebastopol to storm, that there is not the slightest occasion to imitate the Athenians under Themistocles, and embark their household gods. They crave the inducement of a tragic glory and opportunity to create an undying fame by a single effort. But the higher heroism of which I speak, avoids rather than seeks the pomp and circumstance of war and the glare of publicity. It is true that enthusiasm is for the most part respectable. Even when its results are most deplorable, it bears testimony to the moral and religious nature of man. It implies an acting up to principle, and a disregard of immediate selfish considerations. Enthusiasm, no less than laughter, distinguishes man from the lower creation; still, the self-sacrifices to which it impels, are not the *most* noble. We know it is not in moments of excitement that the voice of conscience is most readily heard and obeyed; we know that soldiers, after the first moments of the conflict, customarily lose all sense of danger, are urged on by a wild agitation of the spirits, and make the final assault in almost a state of delirium. The foundation of heroism of this kind is physical courage and common manly sentiment. We know, too, that enthusiasm, in the form of fanaticism, enables men to endure excruciating agonies without a cry: the lamas of Tibet inflict on themselves ghastly wounds; Hindoos suffer themselves to be hooked up by the muscles of the back, and swung round and round in that painful state of suspension, without murmur of complaint. Yet we cannot suppose these men to be braver, or possessed of higher moral qualities, than the European who groans with the toothache, and is terribly distressed by a simple fracture of the arm.

The truest heroism requires for its exhibition calm reflection and deliberate will, rather than excitement. Instead of the heat of the affray, or the ardour of a mistaken faith, its groundwork is a sense of duty able to contend with conflicting and baser motives. Patient uncomplaining endurance—steady perseverance in overcoming obstacles—conduct always upright in good and evil report, when no human eye may see with commendation, and no human heart respond with sympathy—this is true heroism, and raises its possessor far beyond the ranks of those who plant the standard on a well-won breach. Such heroism as this requires no historical arena; it lies as much within the reach of the man of peace as of the warrior, of the private citizen as of the statesman or sage. If we were to obey the moral law unflinchingly, and learn to labour and wait, we should all be heroes, and earth all hallowed ground. From this point of view, the reflective mind sees more heroism in the endurance of soldiers in the trenches, than in their courage at the assault. From this point of view, the scene of the company of soldiers going down with the *Ocean Monarch* in parade order, with their colonel at their head, strikes us as a greater triumph than that achieved by Leonidas and his three hundred braves; and we recognise in unfortunate wives who come before our police-courts bruised and disfigured by the barbarity of their husbands, and decline to give evidence against them, 'because they are only so when in drink,' the Arrias of modern times. We do wrong, therefore, when we allow stage-effect and brilliant éclat to throw too much into the shade the less obtrusive heroism of private life. If any man feels such accessories to be necessary to the display of his heroic spirit, he may be assured that he is under a wrong impression, and does not possess any such faculty at all. Vanity or ambition may enable him to bear the pains and penalties of such a spirit, and give himself the semblance of a hero; but if he wins the esteem and honour due to such a character, it is by means of false pretences, and the reward so won will assuredly fail to become a recompense in its enjoyment.

A PARISIAN LITTERATEUR.

THE voluminous autobiography of Alexandre Dumas is in many respects a very noticeable work, but in none more so than in the minuteness of detail with which it depicts the career of a Parisian litterateur. If this detail were unmixed with extraneous matter, it would be all the more acceptable. Dumas has been the contemporary of many remarkable literary men and artists—with all of them he has been personally acquainted; with many he has lived on terms of intimacy; and if he had chosen to confine within reasonable limits an account of his relations with these men, his impressions of their works, with the anecdotes and information current in the literary, artistic, musical, and theatrical circles of Paris from the death of Louis XVIII. to the revolution of 1848—when the break-up took place—he would have produced a book not only amusing to his contemporaries at home, and instructive to the public of Europe at large, but a valuable contribution to social history.

Instead of confining himself to this, Alexandre Dumas has been seized with the unfortunate idea of incorporating in his personal memoirs the general political and diplomatic history of Europe, which we have already had in newspapers and blue-books, and which we are in course of having crystallised in the works of those professed historians whose business is politics, and who employ their leisure on subjects within their speciality. Nothing more dreary than the political history of M. Alexandre Dumas, dramatised with its startling points and dénouements; it is like reading his own *Louis XIV.* after laying down Mezeray, or possessing a coupon of Royal British Bank Stock compared with one of the Bank of England; but in the other part of his work we feel that he stands on his own ground, and that he is there indeed a master. Like an oasis after a desert journey, nothing can be more agreeable than to go out of the hazy sandy atmosphere of politics to the verdant regions of art. A new poem of Hugo, a rehearsal at the Porte St Martin or the Odéon, a squabble with the critics, a soirée of artists; all such form the pleasant parts of the book.

The life of Alexandre Dumas commenced with the century; his father, whom he lost early, had rapidly risen to the rank of lieutenant-general in the republican armies; and we find, in the early part of the son's career, a meritorious struggle on the part of both widow and orphan to make ends meet. At length the ardent genius of the son, impatient of a residence in a provincial town, invited him to try his fortunes in Paris, the mother having been compelled to sell her house and farm. His first impulse was to look up to the friends of his father—Marshal Victor, Duke of Belluno; Marshal Jourdan; and Marshal, then General, Sebastiani. He was admitted to Marshal Jourdan, who imagined that the father whom he had believed dead was paying him a visit. But he had never heard that he had a son; and, in spite of all that young Dumas could say, he was dismissed in a few minutes, without the marshal being satisfied of his identity, or disposed to commence acquaintance. But he was more successful with General Foy, the French historian of the Peninsular war, and the most impressive of the orators of the opposition in 1823. General Foy lived in the Rue Mont Blanc, and Dumas found him working at his Spanish military history. He wrote standing at one of those tables that may be raised or lowered at will. All around him, on chairs and sofas, was a heterogeneous mass of printer's proofs, maps, books, and newspapers. The general himself was a man of fifty, thin, small, with his hair growing gray, a brow like the hemisphere of a cannon-ball, an aquiline nose, and a bilious complexion. He carried his head erect, his language was brief, and his gesticulation imperious. 'Ah!' said he, 'are you the son of the General Dumas who was in the army of the Alps?' to which an affirmative answer was given, with the presentation of a letter of introduction. 'But before I can be of use to you,' said the general, 'I must first know what you are good for. Do you know anything of mathematics?—algebra?—geometry?—natural philosophy?—Latin?—Greek?—or book-keeping?' To each of these interrogatories, enounced slowly by the general, a negative answer was given—the face of the aspirant youth reddening into the deepest scarlet, and the perspiration dropping from his brow. At last the general asked for his address, with some commiseration; but scarcely had he written his name, when the general said: 'We are saved! You have a beautiful hand-writing.' Dumas was not delighted in having a copying clerkship pointed out for his destination; but General Foy continued, saying: 'I dine to-day at the Palais Royal; I will speak of you to the Duke of Orleans, and see if it is not possible to get you into his office.'

A petition was written out by the future dramatic poet. The leader of the opposition—dining with the future king of the French, in the palace built by Richelieu—spoke of the son of the republican general; and the end of it was the appointment of Alexandre Dumas to a place of L.48 a year, in the office of the Duke of Orleans; for his property was so vast as to require a formal administration, like a small government department. Here the dramatist passed the first years of his residence in Paris, working during the day on the details of the forest cuttings of Villars-Cotterets, or the rents of the Palais Royal; and at night, visiting the theatres, reading translations of Schiller and Shakspeare, and casting about for the materials of a drama of his own.

We have no space for the many droll stories which he gives of this period of his life—one of the best of which is his account of a first visit to a theatre, when he paid for a place in the *queue*, and being obstreperous upon having to pay at the bureau again, was turned out of the theatre. At this period, Dumas made the acquaintance of Fréderic Soulié, and he gives his opinion of this remarkable but unequal genius: he considers that Soulié had something obscure in his brain; his thoughts being like the world, lighted only on one side, the antipodes of the illuminated side being plunged in darkness; and that, notwithstanding the scenes of extraordinary power he has produced, he never knew how to begin or end a drama or a romance. Soulié began timidly, and exposed his action painfully, so that his fine scenes were arrived at after a disagreeable apprenticeship of the reader's or spectators' patience. He lived on a small pension which his father allowed him, in a modest apartment in the Rue de Provence, among the furniture of which was a piano, on which he used to play. Afterwards he became a man of business, engaged in a mechanical sawing establishment, and died some years ago, well off, his time divided between Apollo and Mercury.

The theatrical experiences of Dumas are the clearest portions of the memoirs. Talma was still on the stage, and its acknowledged monarch; Mademoiselle Mars was at the height of her reputation and power. We have all the quarrels of the old classical authors with the rising dramatists of the new school, who were declared to be not 'sons of France, but bastards of England and Germany.' As for Dumas's collaborations and plagiarisms, we have his share in the former stiffly argued, and the latter freely confessed. Our deliberate opinion—after having seen represented or having read his best works, as well as learned the opinion entertained of him by his Parisian colleagues—is, that he is a man of most marvellous powers of invention, of great fertility of resource, of great skill in the construction of dramas, and of great capacity for labour, in addition to natural gaiety of style and facility of production. He has not the high poetry of Lamartine or Hugo; but even if he had had no collaboration, he is still the man to have outstripped all others in abundance of effective dramas. His misfortune has been habits of prodigality, which have injured his personal fortunes and literary reputation. From the first he shewed great powers of construction and animated dialogue—the one the body, the other the soul of the drama—but unfortunately this necessity for the requisites of a profuse hospitality has compelled him, first of all, to involve himself in an extensive collaboration, and at last to lend his highly popular name to many works in which he had no hand whatever. He began with works of genius; he continued by the rearrangement of the raw materials of others with masterly skill; and at last arrived at such habits of labour as to be able to work from ten to fourteen hours a day, year after year. If we add to these enormous labours the number of works to which he lent his name without contributing a thought, his princely revenue and prodigal luxury cease to be a marvel.

Talma was the most important of his early theatrical acquaintances. This distinguished artist was born at Paris in 1766. His father was many years a celebrated dentist in London, who had among his patients the Prince of Wales, subsequently George IV.; and the *début* of the son was in 1787. From that time he retained undivided possession of the Paris stage. Talma had the four great qualities of an actor—person, expression of countenance, voice, and intellectual capacity.

Without being what the French call *un homme d'esprit* of an acute and lively conversation, he had great erudition in relation to his profession. When he was on the point of creating a part, he grudged no historical research that might throw light on the character, the transaction, or the nature of the epoch. In short, like our own Garrick, he appears to have been superior to all his predecessors and successors.

In high comedy, Mademoiselle Mars seems to have attained the same elevation. Dumas pronounces her to be an honest woman, severely exact in the fulfilment of all her agreements, and as punctual at rehearsals as a post-office clerk at his bureau. 'I beg pardon,' said she on the single occasion of her having been absent for a quarter of an hour; 'but I have just lost forty thousand francs. Vîte, commençons!'

After many discussions, Dumas got his play of *Henri III.* accepted at the Théâtre Français; but his entrance into the temple of Thespis proved to be his exit from the service of the Duke of Orleans. M. de Broval, the director-general of the affairs of the Duke of Orleans, gave Dumas politely to understand that literature and bureaucracy were two enemies who could not live together, and that he must choose between them.

'I understand,' said the poet, 'that if I pursue my vocation of man of letters, I am dismissed.'

'Yes,' said the baron—whom the author, with a grudge, described as being a baron with a large red nose, and one shoulder higher than another.

'Then I decide for the career of letters,' rejoined the poet.

'And how will you support your mother?' said the baron.

'Oh, that is my affair,' added Dumas. And thus his independent career commenced.

But although no longer serving the Duke of Orleans in an economical capacity, he was by no means unwilling to have him for a literary patron. He therefore determined to ask him to be present at a representation of his piece. The future Louis-Philippe was a handsome man of fifty at that time, not so very fat as he subsequently became, with a lively, intelligent countenance, and affable manners, but which never went so far as to allow people to forget his rank, except when he had to do with some very vain member of the *bourgeoisie*, and had a point to gain. His voice was agreeable in speaking, but he had a habit in his familiar moments of humming mass-music with a false intonation.

'Ah, Monsieur Dumas,' said the Duke of Orleans, 'what good wind brings you here?'

'My desire that your royal highness should be present at the first representation of *Henri III.*'

'That is impossible,' said the duke, 'for I have to-morrow twenty or thirty people to dine with me.'

'Ah, that is easily arranged,' said the indefatigable Dumas. 'I can delay the commencement of the play for an hour, by an arrangement with the manager, and if your highness can advance your dinner for an hour, my object is gained.'

The duke consented. The proposed arrangement was entered into by the manager of the theatre; and on the evening of the performance, Dumas was congratulated in a letter from the baron with the red nose and the hump shoulder. But after a day or two, the play was forbidden, under the pretext that it was a covert allusion to Charles X. and the Duke of Orleans. However, the prohibition was removed, and the Duke of Orleans, calling Dumas into his box, said:

'You have nearly brought me into a scrape. The king sent for me yesterday, saying I am told there is a young man in your bureaux who has represented me as Henri III., and you as the Duke of Guise.'

'Your highness,' said Dumas, 'could answer that this young man was no longer in your bureaux.'

'No,' said the Duke of Orleans; 'I preferred another answer, for I retain you in my service. "Sire," said I, "you are mistaken; for I do not beat my wife; the Duchess of Orleans is not unfaithful to me, and your majesty has not a more faithful subject than myself."' He then added: 'Come to the Palais Royal to-morrow morning; the Duchess of Orleans wishes to see you.' In short, *Henri III.* laid the foundation of Dumas's literary fortunes by a signal success.

Thus launched into the world of Paris society, Dumas became a diner-out of the first lustre, and various lion-hunters sought his acquaintance. One of these was the well-known ex-director, Count Barras, who, after all the moving accidents of the earlier part of his life, saved 200,000 francs a year out of the wreck of his political fortunes, and spent his old age in giving literary dinners. He was a man of old family; and before the great rise of prices in France, this sum enabled him to live in a luxurious manner. Dumas was presented to him by Dr Cabarrus, son of the beautiful Thérèse Cabarrus, subsequently known by the name of Madame Tallien, the belle of the Directorial phase of French society, who married the Prince de Chimay for her third husband. Barras received them in his villa at Chaillot sitting in his arm-chair, which in the last years of his life he never quitted. He was then seventy-four years of age (1829), and a fine-looking old man. He wore a cap on his head, only his face and his hands giving signs of life; for from time to time he fell into a lethargy, as if he were dying. When the hour of dinner came, the folding-doors opened, and Barras was wheeled to his place at table. The dinner was sumptuous; but Barras's only part in the entertainment was to dip his bread in a plate filled with juice of the cuttings of a leg of mutton. This was the extent of his share of the feast.

The Princess de Chimay was of the party, but styled citizeness. Her husband had a familiar valet-de-chambre who stood behind him, and, as in old plays, took part in the conversation, and on one occasion tapped a general on the shoulder with the apostrophe: 'Général, je vous arrête;' and then proceeded, to the utter astonishment of the general, to correct his memory on some revolutionary fact. When Sir Walter Scott was in Paris, Barras wished to see him, and commissioned Dr Cabarrus to invite him to dinner; but Scott shook his head, and answered that in his forthcoming history of Napoleon he intended to take an unfavourable view of the character of Barras; and that if he were to dine with him, and then to abuse him, people would say, when he went back to Scotland, 'that he had thrown the dinner-plates at his head.'

Such as these, we think, present amusing glimpses of the life of a Parisian litterateur; and so we take our leave of Dumas.

ANT GOSSIP.

Long before the real natural history of ants was known, they did duty as models, examples, and illustrations for writers, both sacred and profane: often ignorantly, as in the ancient fable, which represented them as devoted to the science of political economy, and prefiguring the establishment of savings-banks; but always pleasantly—a pleasantness which a truer knowledge of their world and ways only augments and heightens.

Of course, every one knows how ants and bees are taken to represent the two great sects of human politicians; how republicanism is made to find its antitype in the formic community, and monarchy its exemplar in the apiarian kingdom. But concerning this same republicanism, we have a word to say, which perhaps may give a different formula to the constitution of some of the pismires, and destroy their claim to be considered as belonging to the Rouges. Anyhow, it will be proved that their republicanism, if it exist at all, is of the Spartan and oligarchic character, and the furthest possible removed from any modern notions of socialism.

To begin with: Who, among the Red ants, are those four, or five, or eight, or ten ladies surrounded by guards and courtiers, who all reside together in the same large chamber, for all the world, like an eastern harem, solely occupied with the cares of futurity and the hopes of maternity? Wherever one of these royal ladies turns, she is received with respect and obedience; her guards, or rather her court, leap and dance before her, caressing her with their antennæ, and talking to each other about her by means of the same organs. She is the centre of their world, the cynosure of their regards; and if you separate her from them, they soon form themselves into a dense body and enclose her in the midst. If you take her away altogether, they go mad outright. Their queens had once wings. One fine day they and their mates left the ant-hill, and flew up into the air. The ants—the workers, soldiers, and nurses—all followed them as far as they could, and as long as they remained in the neighbourhood; and even after they had flown off, parties of scouts and guards scoured the country for—to them—miles round, waiting until one or more of the females should alight on the earth again; when, so soon as their feet touched the damp soil, their wings dropped off, and they were thenceforth under the care and jealous homage of the colony. As for the poor winged mates, their business in life was over. They might be entangled in spiders' webs, or fall into the ant-lion's den, or be devoured by huge feathered monsters, or lie on the ground and die of hunger—not an ant of the whole hill would stir an antenna to console or give them a mouthful of food to support them. Their work was done; their day was over; their only business now was to die as quickly as might be, and rid the world of their woes. If the luckier spouse were to die, how different the treatment she would receive! Faithful attendants would lick and brush her lifeless corpse for days and days together; and it would be hard work to console them; impossible, indeed, if there were not others to whom they might transfer their allegiance, and their love. What is all this but a gyneocracy which brings to our minds the devotion of the days of chivalry—Lancelot du Lac, and all the rest of them?

Again: that lady and gentleman belonging to the White ants, carefully selected from a crowd of competitors, and kept by the community in the same kind of royal thraldom as the wingless ladies of the Red—also, like them, surrounded by guards and courtiers, and also occupied with the cares of futurity—what are they but elective monarchs, reigning on strictly constitutional principles, under the control and surveillance of their faithful commons? Then the slave-taking expeditions—when an army of Amazon or Legionary ants march out to the encampments of the Negro ants, attack, carry, and sack them, and return to their own city laden with slaves in embryo—what is this but republicanism, according to the charter of Lacedæmon?—indeed, according to the charter of a more modern republic as well, but by no means the ideal commonwealth of utopias or phalansteries. Is not the standing army, too, of some ants an institution anti-republican? and does not the violence and authority of command shewn by individuals with more brains than the rest, to others less intelligent and more wilful, hinge on the great law of rule individual or by caste, which is never found in simple democracies, and always accompanies monarchies and oligarchies? We admit that there are arguments on the other side as well, for tribes and species differ in their national peculiarities. A party of Germans, Italians, Englishmen, and Cherokees are not more different, one from the other, than are the turf-ants and the wood-ants, the red ants and the white ants, the yellow ants and the negro ants, *cum multis aliis*. And though the rough draft of the various governments is much the same for all, yet there is a wide margin left for annotations and 'amendments.'

One of the strangest of the many strange phenomena connected with the ant-world is their battles. Two cities of the Wood ant, if situated within marching-distance of each other, must needs go to war. It is part of their existence. Fine large military roads, 'diverging from the ant-hill like so many rays from a centre,' lead out from and to each encampment. From morning to night, these roads are thickly peopled, apparently without any hostile feeling on the part of either tribe; but suddenly the war-hatchet is unburied, the pipe of peace is smoked out, and our Wood friends mutually arrange their battalions for a regular hand-to-hand fight. They do their work with such fury that the ground is covered with the dead and dying; and so engrossed are they with the sublime duty of stifling with venom or mutilating and devouring each other, that they pay no attention even to a human foot, which may come down on the wings and outposts of their armies, and scrunch the warriors' bones beneath its tread. All the time of the battle, the civic business of the two colonies goes on undisturbed; and after the fight has lasted for a certain number of days, the war-hatchet is once more buried, the warriors cease to frequent the roads that lead to the hostile encampment, and the quiet of the city is undisturbed on the right hand and on the left.

But the ant-battles are not always between two rival camps of the same tribe, nor yet always undertaken for prey and plunder when between different tribes. Sometimes two armies of different species will fight from no other apparent cause than the love of fighting. Thus, the Herculean ant, nearly half an inch long—not known in England—and the Sanguine ant, only half its size, were watched by Huber in a deadly affray, all for no visible end. The Herculeans quitted the trunk of a tree where they had lodged themselves, and marched up to the very gates of the Sanguine city. The besieged acted on the defensive, and suffered themselves to be slaughtered without mercy. After the first brush, and while the Herculeans were taking breath, they transported all their valuables, eggs, grubs, pupæ, queens, &c., to a distance of fifty feet, under cover of outposts, placed at intervals, both to guard their retreat, and to ward off any sudden attack on the city itself. And when all was completed, the return-blow was struck, in which the Herculeans had the worst of it, as they deserved. The small Sanguine might often have been overpowered by the superior weight and size of its antagonist, had not its brethren in arms come to its assistance; and amongst them all, the formic Heracleidan either perished on the battle-field, or was conducted prisoner to the camp, there to be put to a cruel death. The Sanguine had the advantage in numbers, and numbers overcame strength.

The Sanguines are among the slaveholding populations, and harry and worry the poor Negro ants out of their existence, whenever they have the chance. The Negroes resist as long as they are able; but when they have fairly lost the field, they carry off as many of their pupæ and young females as they can; some even—more courageous than our stoutest heroes—will return alone, through the very thick of the sacking army, down to the chambers where lie the unconscious grubs and eggs, and endeavour to rescue one or more from the mandibles of the enemy. In the very beginning of the fray, they had placed as many of their treasures as they could carry in comparative safety on the covered side of the hill. Those are the treasures they are carrying off now in full and rapid retreat, the Sanguine wretches chasing them virulently. The poor Negroes take kindly enough to servitude; and when their masters return home after a foray, bringing fresh prisoners even of their own tribe, they will caress and offer the robbers food, with an utter obliviousness of patriotism, and a sad facility of chain-bearing. But it must be remembered, in mitigation of our contempt, that adult Negroes are never captured: the slave-owners are too wise for that. They take them young, indeed before they are born, and so secure themselves against inconvenient reminiscences. The Negroes are the workers, the squaws, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, the nurses and factotums of their warrior-masters; while these huge, awkward, feckless fellows, sit at the bottom of their city waiting until another spell of soldiering calls them forth. Why, they cannot even feed themselves! The Negroes have actually to feed them; and as for taking care of their eggs or grubs, or building anything like a shelter for them or for themselves, they have about as much idea of that as a new-born baby! In one experiment that was made, when warriors, pupæ, and larvæ were all thrown together into a box, where there was both earth to build with, and honey to eat, the huge helpless men-of-war roamed about and about in a wild distracted sort of way, looked at their grubs, and evidently did not know what to do with them, though all their materials were at hand. They died, some of these great creatures, and would soon have all perished in the very lap of plenty, had not the experimenter let in one tidy, industrious, canny little Negro; and this creature, alone and unassisted, built cells for the young, fed the gasping warriors, arranged and smoothed and fashioned all into order, just like a dear little Ruth Pinch as she was, in the midst of a set of awkward helpless giants. The Negroes build the city, feed the warrior-citizens, nurse the grubs, whether warrior-grubs or Negro; in short, do all the loving, careful, and intelligent work of the community, and are faithful and devoted to the death; but, like all indispensable and spoiled servants, they are dictatorial. They will not allow one of their robber-masters to leave the city alone, nor before the proper time of bloodshed and rapine has arrived; and if they return from a raid without the expected lift, the Negroes give them the cold shoulder; and, if very incensed, will not allow them to enter the city at all. If they dare to enter, dogged and sulky, the little Negroes drag them out again with a lantara that sends the crest-fallen bucaniers a-soldiering again, by their leave or without it.

Some ants keep not only Negroes, but also the eggs of the aphis, their cow, of which they take jealous and incessant care. Every one knows how an ant treats an aphis; how it goes sidling up to the fat quiet thing, and caresses her with its antennæ, till cowey, in a fit of gratitude and pleasure, gives out her drop of honey-dew, which pismire laps up—ants *lap* when they drink, something like a cat—then strolls off to milk another aphis-cow by the like means. But every one does not know that ants wrestle and play together, like a couple of boys let loose from school. Huber found out that fact, as indeed he found out most of the secrets of the ant-hill. He went one day to his formicary of wood-ants, and saw at a glance that no work was being done that day; but he saw also that they were all in a state of extraordinary excitement. A little attention shewed him his ants dancing on their hind-legs, patting each other with their antennæ, in evident invitation to come out boys and girls to play, and playing, by seizing each other by a mandible, foot, or antenna; then wrestling with might and main, turning, closing again, hiding from each other, finding each other again; sometimes, when one was victor undoubtedly, he would attack many others in succession, overthrowing them all like nine-pins. Sometimes, too, especially the hill-ants, they amuse themselves by carrying each other pickaback, or in their mouths, as cats carry their kittens, or dogs their puppies. On graver occasions, as, for instance, if their pupæ and grubs are buried under the ruins of their invaded city, they may be seen digging them out from the wreck, and carrying them off, like the old St Bernard dogs in the pictures, all snow and babies.

But our European ants are mere nobodies compared to the great white ant of India, that terrible fellow who will eat away the legs of your table in a night, and leave you only the simulacrum of a table, a superficial outside, a mere sham, as you find to your cost if you put anything on the top. The white ant lives chiefly on wood. He will excavate a tree, living or dead, a post, a table, a book-case, a cask of wine—and let all the wine out—the beams of a house; anything, in short, made of wood, will he gnaw his way into, leaving the outside intact, so that it is only by a luckless experiment that his depredations are found out. If he eats away the supporting beams, however, of a ceiling, or of anything which, that support being withdrawn, would fall and crush him on the spot, he ingeniously repairs his damage with a kind of cement he makes out of clay and earth; so that he literally turns wooden pillars into stone, filling in with cement all he destroys in wood. They make enormous nests five or six feet high; these nests, when only half finished, are strong enough to serve as stations for the wild bulls, the leaders of the herd, from whence they can better see their subjects feeding in the plain below. The Indians eat the white ants, and uncommonly good eating they are reported to be. One gastronome said that they were like sugared marrow; another, like sugared cream and sweet almonds—similes very exciting to one's organ of gustativeness. The white ants hoard up large magazines of tree-gums for their queens and their young to eat—gums of every shade of colour and of every variety. Some white ants build their nests something like toadstools—these are called turret-building; others build in trees; but the generality make their hill-nests, as we stated above, and construct covered-ways to wherever they want to go. So jealous are they of being seen, so modest, too, in their rapaciousness, that they will not eat in sight of day, but must needs be walled and vaulted in, like novices or odalisques. They are monstrously unpleasant neighbours—as bad as a remove or a fire for one's furniture. The carpenter ants are also exceedingly jealous of observation. They live in trees, and will not stay to be studied, not though bribes of honey or sugar be placed before their very mouths. The jet-ant is the most renowned of the carpenters; he dyes all his wood jet black, and makes a very dingy-looking city. But his carving is singularly delicate; and he constructs columns and arches, galleries, halls, and vestibules, like the best trained architect in London. The mason-ant understands the principle of the arch, as the bees know the value of the hexagonal cell. He can balance his grains and blocks without cement, so as to form a perfect vault, fashioned on correct mathematical principles.

O the grand, the interesting world that lies at our feet, and skims above our heads! O the wisdom, the intelligence, the beauty and the power, shewn in the despised insect-races, which half the world crush under their feet, or brush shudderingly away! We know of no study more full of boundless interest than the study of entomology, than the reading, in small type, the words of eternal beauty, love, and wisdom, by which

God made the world—none that we would recommend as a surer heal-all to the heart-sick and the weary, the loveless and the lovely! And the alpha of entomology we hold to be the ant-hill.

THE GHOST-PLAY.

It would almost seem as if every man in the French army was an Alsatian, so frequent is the reply, when you ask a soldier 'from what part of France are you?' 'From Alsace.' The warlike spirit once prevailing in that province may have become second nature to the inhabitants. Being an exposed frontier, it was, in former days, continually attacked by the rivals and enemies of France, and a prey to all the adventurers disbanded by belligerent powers; consequently, it was forced to be for ever on the defensive; and apparently not having enough of fighting with foes, the peasants and their lords filled up the intervals of contention with strangers by violent quarrels of their own. We may be sure, when in steaming through the country, a picturesque ruin on an inaccessible height is seen for an instant and lost again, that all between its crumbling walls and the nearest town has been, over and over again, pillaged, ravaged, burnt, and submitted to every kind of violence from the days of Attila to those of Napoleon the Great. Every one of the pretty valleys of the Vosges has been, in its turn, the scene of a desperate battle and a bloody struggle. The amazing part of the story is, that the smallest bit of wall or cement should still remain to remind the antiquarian traveller of what has been; for there is scarcely a woody hill which is not crowned by its castle, and which does not in its depths conceal enormous heaps of ruin, telling of the extent of its dependencies. As certain as you are to see these artistic bits, so sure, also, are you to perceive, immediately beneath feudal towers, the tall chimneys of some powerful manufactory, which now bears sway throughout this commercial district; and marvellous is the size of these intrusive but valuable buildings, with their long ranges of windows, and their immensely lofty walls. They are not at all picturesque, neither are the swarms of work-people, male and female, who pour from out their portals in haste to snatch a rapid meal, and return to their ceaseless occupation. Every hand in every village is employed; and whatever other complaints may be heard, want of occupation is not amongst the grievances. The proprietors of these extensive mills and manufactories are men of immense wealth; but those whose work has made them so are about as miserable, savage, and uncomfortable a looking race as one could meet. A sentimental or philosophic traveller, perceiving this, might be induced to ask the difference between the lot of the peasant, whose existence is given up to the lord of the mills of the present day, and that of the vassal whose life was devoted to the lord of yonder castle some centuries ago. Perhaps the tyrant of those towers was forced to live on his estates; but certain it is that the rich proprietor now-a-days is spending his money, gained in these valleys, in some luxurious city far away, never visiting his 'native vales' except to assure himself that the grinding of gold is prosperously going on. Not content with usurping the sites of old castles, many of the manufactories are actually wedged into the indestructible walls, effacing them with newness and completeness. They say to the strongholds of the Lothaires and Childeberts: 'Our turn is come;' and exulting wreaths of black smoke are sent sailing from huge chimneys, from the vales to the mountains, and far over the still crowding forests. The Roman conquerors, who made *stations* once upon a time along the line of road from Strasbourg to Basel, little contemplated the sort of stations which the railway has now strewn upon their traces.

Where once stood the strongly defended monastery of Koenigshoffen, and its protecting neighbours of Geispolzheim and Ostwald, the whole site is now occupied by a colony established by the benevolent mayor of Strasbourg, M. Schutzenberger, who, determined to utilise the very worst materials, and give a chance to the least respectable of the inhabitants of his magnificent city, has carried out his noble scheme of reformation, and has the triumph of finding his exertions entirely successful. Part of the forest which covers the range of hills was cleared, air and light were let into the landscape, the ground was drained and cultivated, and at this moment a productive district has taken the place of a mere desert. The peace and comfort now to be found in the colony of Ostwald are probably appreciated by the families of former pickpockets and housebreakers, who consented to try the experiment of the policy of honesty; for nothing can appear more respectable or well-to-do than those who carry on their occupations in the locality.

The plain at the foot of the hill, where cottages are beginning to group themselves, is the site of a desperate battle between Marlborough and Turenne; but the names of both those redoubted generals are forgotten in that of the sensible and judicious mayor of Strasbourg.

The good king Dagobert, if his spirit were permitted to revisit the spots in which he formerly delighted, would certainly be startled at the change in his monastic village of Geispolzheim, where, if he got out of the train bodily, he would lose himself in endeavouring to find his monks; and in equal amazement would the ghost of Charlemagne be, should he seek at the next station for his beloved city of Rosheim, for he would recognise little there but the beautiful tower of the church he built for his lieges. Nothing can be prettier than the position of this charming village of Rosheim, nestled at the foot of a high hill, on the summit of which stand the fine ruins of the Castle of Guirbaden. No doubt, by the name of it, there were always baths here. There is a very fine bathing establishment now, probably on the same spot where Charlemagne indulged in the luxury. It is quite worth while for a traveller, who is not in a hurry, to stop at the station and give an afternoon to the ruins, or rather to the delicious walk to them, which will repay him at every step by the fine views it gives over a most remarkable country of gorges and ravines, meandering rivers and thick woods, and chains of mountains stretching into mazy distances; to every one of whose subject heights attaches some legend, reviving the poetical climber whose breath begins to fail him, and who will always gain by packing up a little romantic lore in his head, as well as sandwiches in his basket, before he sets out on any excursion in a wild country like Alsace; for, after all, huge manufactories and gigantic chimneys, when often repeated, become as monotonous as stories of castles and of giants; therefore, it is not amiss to make sandwiches of the two classes of interest, and take them by turns during the journey.

To this Castle of Guirbaden attaches a very wild story, quite suited to the scene. It seems that in the seventeenth century, while fierce war was carried on between the Alsatians and Lorrainers, the castle was betrayed into the hands of the latter by a perfidious servant of the Countess of Guirbaden. Every year, since that time, on the anniversary of the fair of Haslach—the village at the foot of the hill—a sort of expiatory ghost-play is acted in the castle ruins, which lasts a whole week. The *dramatis personæ* are the countess, the governor, the false vassal, and the men-at-arms concerned in the defence of the stronghold, and the drama is as follows: At midnight, the governor rises from his tomb in the vaults, and hurries from gallery to gallery, summoning, in a hoarse and solemn voice, his garrison to be on the alert, and arise for vengeance. Four of these descend the stone stairs of the great tower to a vault so deeply concealed that no human eye can now discover it. Here they take up the coffin of the countess, and bear it to the great hall. They then, together with the rest of the men-at-arms and servants, arrange themselves round it in awful silence. The governor takes his seat near; he is habited in a robe without sleeves; and the cavities where his eyes should be are filled with blood. This is in memory of tortures he underwent from the Lorrainers to induce him to discover where the treasure of the countess was hidden. The traitor who betrayed the castle is then introduced, and his trial begins. He is dressed in red, and holds in his hands the huge key of the postern-gate by which he admitted the enemy. He appears to be overwhelmed with remorse and fear, and stammers forth excuses, and pleads for pardon for some moments, no interruption being offered; but when a quarter to two strikes from an invisible clock, the judges proceed to the vote, and after a period of deliberation, the governor slowly approaches the coffin of the countess, and appears to consult his dead mistress. Presently a harsh voice proceeds from the corpse; and the words 'Let him be delivered to justice' resound through the hall. This occurs exactly at the moment the bell is striking two, and at the same instant begins a terrible chase, of which the wretched culprit is the object. He utters the most piercing shrieks as he darts from the spot pursued by the governor and all his attendants. The latter rush to the outward walls of the castle, and there, taking each other's hands, they form a circle, in which they whirl madly round, hemming in the terrified criminal, accompanying their wild dance by hideous howlings and execrations, all the time the great bell of the castle tolling as loudly as if it still hung in the empty belfry, through which the stars glimmer. This commotion lasts till four o'clock, when, at the last stroke of the hour, the whole phantom-crowd suddenly disappears, everything returns to silence and repose, and the drama is ended for that night, to be repeated nightly till the week is finished, and the castle is restored to the moon and the owls for another year.

The owl, indeed, had a good deal to do with this Castle of Guirbaden, which, in times more recent than those when the real tragedy was acted which this ghost-play shadows forth, was a place of much revelry and hilarity. The guest was received by the lord of the castle with cordiality, conducted into a state-apartment, and there crowned with a certain beaver-hat, which it was his privilege to wear all the time he remained. After this, he was invited and expected to drink to the last drop the contents of a huge cup, made in the form of an owl, in honour of his entertainer; and according as he succeeded with facility or otherwise, rose his fame amongst the jovial company of the Castle of Guirbaden.

PREVENTION OF CASUALTIES ON GOODWIN SANDS.

Along the narrowest part of the English Channel, off the Kentish coast, is a quicksand about twenty miles long, and several miles broad. On the edge of this abyss, at long intervals, are some scattered lights; but, during hazy weather, confounded with numerous other beacons, these are worse than useless, while in storms they disappear altogether. This abyss is the famous Goodwin, where some noble ship, with her whole crew, is every now and then engulfed. A more efficient, but very simple protection has been devised by Mr George Chowen; consisting of a double line of buoys, each furnished with a large sonorous bell, placed round the entire area, the outer line two miles from the quicksand; the inner, a quarter of a mile nearer; and the buoys 100 yards apart. On the coast-side, one line would suffice, with the buoys 300 yards apart. In stormy weather, the bells would be set in motion by the sea; and in an absolute calm, so far as steamers are concerned, the paddles would serve to draw forth the warning voice.

EN AVANT!

Heavy and thick the atmosphere,
The prospect narrow, dark, severe—
Yet a few steps the path is clear,
For those few steps, march on!

Dark rocks that frown as if in wrath,
Like giants ranged across the path—
Be sure the gorge some outlet hath,
So trustfully march on!

A deep wide stream that shines like glass,
Flanked by steep banks of slippery grass—
There is some bridge by which to pass,
So watchfully march on!

A tempest rattling in the wind,
The sun in thunder-robes enshrined—
Doubt not some shelter soon to find,
Still hopefully march on!

The day goes out—the fog upcrowds,
Darkness the face of heaven enshrouds—
A voice shall guide thee through the clouds,
So patiently march on!

If Duty set you on the way,
You need not fear—you must not stay;
Still faithfully her word obey,
Still loyally march on!

Let but your aims be high and true,
Your spirit firm, but patient too,
A Titan's strength shall go with you,
Still fearlessly march on!

M. H.

'CAPTAIN DODD AT SEA.'

Since the article under this title in No. 173 was printed, the writer's attention has been drawn to certain documents contained in the appendix to Señor Navarrete's *History of the Four Voyages of Columbus*, and which are vouched by the historian to be authentic extracts from the series of Spanish records preserved at Simancas. They narrate that, in the months of May and June 1543, Blasco de Garay, a naval captain in the service of the Emperor Charles V., conducted at Barcelona a series of experiments upon the applicability to ships of a certain propulsive force which he alleged himself to have discovered; that the mechanism which he employed consisted of two wheels, one attached to either extremity of a movable axis which traversed the vessel's waist, and was connected in a peculiar manner with a large caldron of boiling-water; that the experiments were conducted in the presence of several persons of high birth deputed by the emperor to witness them, of many naval commanders, and of 'a crowd of curious persons capable of appreciating the discovery;' that on the seventeenth of the aforesaid month of June, De Garay succeeded in taking to sea a vessel of two hundred tons burden; that she was propelled neither by sail nor oar; and that her rate of speed was about a league an hour. On the authenticity of these documents, strong doubts were cast by the late M. Arago, in the *Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes* for 1828. Whether it was ever successfully vindicated, the present writer has been unable to learn: but if the documents be genuine, as, from Señor Navarrete's character, is not improbable, there can be no doubt that De Garay had actually solved an important physical problem, and was the first to venture to sea in a ship propelled by the agency of *steam*.

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DESIGNERS' ATELIERS IN PARIS.

There is hardly a phase of Paris-life—social, political, industrial, artistic, fashionable, or gastronomic—which is not familiar to general readers. All its picturesque cluster of social grades, from the faded régime that lingers in the Faubourg St Germain, to the chiffonnier population that studs the sloping pavement of the Mont Ste. Geneviève, have been sketched, caricatured, and moralised upon, in every possible aspect. Events, some of them gloomy, some pleasant, have familiarised that class of slippered and fireside travellers, who, as Cowper says, 'run the great circle, and are still at home,' with most of the celebrated spots and edifices of this beautiful city. Notre Dame and the Madeline are as well known to most of them as the cathedrals of Lincoln and Durham, or as the streets and squares of the nearest county town. The double belt of Boulevards, the Champs Elysée—with palaces and the noblest square in Europe at one end, crowned at the other with the Arc de Triomphe and 'Gate of the Star'—create no stranger feeling than connects itself with the mention of Rotten Row or the green slopes of Kensington. Amongst numerous word-photographs, however, of the different industrial classes of Paris, we do not remember to have seen any detailed reference to the designers for textile fabrics—a class of workmen-artists who help very materially to sustain the reputation of this city in all that relates to taste, novelty, and fashion. Under the present imperial sway, graced by a lady whose beauty loses nothing in comparison with that of a Josephine or Marie Antoinette, Paris does not seem likely to resign its long-standing privilege as the dispenser of fashions. Paradoxical as it seems, amid all other changes, Paris, in its most changeful character, remains unchanged. The repeated storms of revolution that have cleared away dynasties and time-honoured institutions, have left untouched the subtile despotism—*le tyran des femmes et des fats*—that yet dictates to every corner of civilised Europe the code of ribbons, patterns, feathers, and flounces. The same source from which, during the reign of Louis Quatorze, we were supplied with patches, periwigs, and poetry, still furnishes our manufacturers with designs, and our metropolitan theatres with farces. Sceptres have been shivered and thrones shattered, but the wand of fashion's 'fickle queen' is as potent as ever, most honoured when most capricious, most venerated when most ridiculous. There she continues to sit in undisputed honour, 'with quips and cranks and wreathed smiles;' fearless of powers either monarchial, republican, or imperial; with the fragments of countless and once-worshipped fancies scattered at her feet, thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks of Vallombrosa.

Few better illustrations can be supplied of this state of things than those to which we are about to refer. The Parisian establishments for industrial design—those at least in connection with the printing of textile fabrics—are principally supported by their transactions with English manufacturers. After all the encouragement which has been given to the introduction and establishment of schools of design in our country, with a view to raising up a superior class of native art-workmen, English printers continue dependent upon foreign skill, and the trade in France for the exportation of Parisian designs is manifestly flourishing and increasing. Several new ateliers have sprung up very recently, chiefly dependent upon that miracle-working agency, British capital. The continuance of such a system is, of course, variously accounted for; some asserting that our art-education, as applied to manufactures, has not yet had time to display its results; others, that the too direct and meddlesome interference of the potentates of Marlborough House with trade interests, has tended to retard the bud it should have more gently helped into flower; whilst another party of tolerably resigned temperament, accepts the fact of our obligations to French taste and invention as neither disennobling nor humiliating, insomuch as it is supposed to represent a feature of that mutual national dependence which knits together the different parts of modern civilisation.

Be this as it may, the birds of passage are not more punctual in their migrations than English and Scotch printers in their perennial pilgrimages to the shrine of fashion. The agreeable relaxation from the dull routine of commercial life which such a custom affords, thus combining both pleasure and profit, contributes no doubt to its perpetuation. As the spring or autumnal season approaches, a few of the bolder and more adventurous leaders of the trade give the first signals of departure; the reward of whose more forward and speculative spirit consists in catching the budding novelty—the 'feeling' of the season—in all its virgin freshness, ere it has become multiplied in a thousand inferior ways, and whilst it possesses all the nascent bloom and attractiveness which belongs to an unhackneyed fashion. In the wake of these, come the timid and numerous progeny that exist and flourish upon the second-hand and half-exhausted fancies of the more courageous magnates of the market; and yet, wonderful indeed is the extent to which the individuals of this class push their claims to all the honours and merits of invention and originality. But the most pitiful era in the onward and *downward* history of the characteristic ideas of any particular season, is when they fall into the hands of the 'low-priced men' and 'jobbers.' These men are content to possess themselves in patience at home, till weft and woof, and block and cylinder, have brought the hard-won novelty—upon the original production of which so much wit and money have been expended—into the form of merchandise, already started upon its long journey to remote quarters of the globe. Then commences their unenviable, though often money-making vocation. Pitiable are the transformations which many good things are destined to undergo when they reach such ruthless hands! The eagerness of these individuals to popularise and cheapen the ideas and labours of others, is as amazing as it is unconscientious. If some aspiring 'high-art' printer were to bring out the cartoons of Raphael at 6d. per yard, we have not the least doubt that one or more of this forward race would rest neither day nor night till they had transferred the designs to inferior cloth, and 'put you them in' at 3¾d.! Some slight alteration of course would be made, sufficient to escape the mere letter of the law, and render the genius of the 'great master' still more questionable than has been already done by the criticisms of Ruskin. With this brief tribute to such merits, *revenons à nos moutons.*

Several of the leading design-ateliers in Paris consist of from forty to fifty workmen, though they generally dwindle down to about half the number during the *morte saisons.* These occur towards the end of the two annual seasons, after the demand for the light or dark styles has been nearly exhausted. To those designers who are in employment, the morte saison is frequently a time of wearisome attempts at creating, anticipating, and guessing the taste of the next busy period. No farmer feels greater anxiety at the approach of seed-time or harvest—no philosopher is more bewildered in attempting to predict from the 'signs of the times'—no premier is more 'at sea' during a recess, than these caterers to novelty when the fashions are in a kind of transitional or chrysaline stage. There is more order and sequence, however, in the successions of the styles associated with textile fabrics, than some grave people imagine: of this philosophy, the French designers are remarkably cognizant; though the practical application of it during such times as those we have referred to, is attended with an unknown degree of uncertainty and embarrassment.

The hours of labour to which these workmen are accustomed are somewhat long, considering the artistic and sedentary character of their occupations, which may very fairly be said to be of those

> Which waste the marrow and consume the brain.

In this respect, they are much less favoured than the designers employed in the print firms of Manchester and Glasgow. The ordinary hours of the French designers, in such establishments as are under our notice—very few of this class in Paris being in the exclusive employ of the printers—are from seven A.M. to six P.M.; though very often, when crowds of English customers are in Paris, waiting to return home with the products of Parisian skill, these workmen toil on, hand and brain, for weeks together, till late every night, and, under such circumstances, generally over a portion of the Sunday. Their intensity and capacity for close application, would be thought incredible by those who only know the French as they have seen them strolling along the Boulevard des Italiens or the Champs Elysée; who measure their endurance by the patience and good-manners they display in waiting at the doors of a theatre, or the untiring energy they devote to the mad frolics of a *bal masqué* at the Opéra Comique.

We have seen a great amount of exaggeration and misstatement respecting the remuneration of French designers. Since manufacturers, instead of employing a staff of designers, each according to his requirements, have begun to depend upon large ateliers for their supply of designs, the rate of wages has gradually sunk. A *chef d'atelier* may occasionally receive six or seven thousand francs per annum, though an ordinary workman would consider himself handsomely remunerated at half such a sum.

The facilities which Paris offers to the attainment of varied excellence in design, and the temptations it offers in so many other respects, help to give a very motley aspect to the groups that compose these workshops. In the national, provincial, and individual varieties of which they are made up, they present faithful epitomes of the similarly diversified world of Paris itself. The principal supply of workmen is from the city and surrounding district of Mülhausen, in Upper Alsace, where the printing of textile fabrics—excluding silks—is carried on to a greater extent and to greater perfection than in any other part of France. Here they become acquainted with the practical operations and executive conditions of their art, a thorough knowledge of which is as necessary to the industrial designer as artistic excellence and taste. Though exceedingly skilful in all that directly relates to their business, these Alsacians are not remarkable either for intelligence or refinement. Situated on the borders of two great empires, and ceded to France only near the commencement of the present century, Alsace possesses neither the nationality nor the language of either its former or present rulers. Its inhabitants speak a German that would be as useless as Greek to a Berliner, and a French that is a sore riddle to Parisians. Switzerland also supplies its quota to these ateliers, of whom we may just as well observe, that they generally seem to manifest a much heartier love of the 'beauties of nature' which are to be found within the Parisian frontier, than ever they entertained for the lakes and mountains of their native land. Besides these, there are a few Frenchmen from different provinces, a sprinkling of Germans, Dutch, Flemings, seldom more than one or two Parisians, and perhaps a solitary Englishman. After this general introduction, we may set the reader at once in the midst of one of these singularly miscellaneous laboratories of design.

There is a young fellow in a colour-besmeared blouse, and a pointed imperial and beard—indicative, we suppose, of a certain political school—angrily defending some suspected policy of Girardin against the insinuations of an opposite party; and yet, amid argument and sarcasm, the rich and elaborate cashmere upon which he is engaged keeps growing more finished and beautiful; colour after colour, and form after form, are being swiftly dashed in, as though there were some latent sympathy between the progressing design and the articles of the 'thunderer' of *La Presse.* Another, busy with the delicate hues and gracefully trailing forms of a composition for muslin, is at the same time relating some mad freak of the previous night at a cheap masquerade; and yet, here again, the work both of speakers and listeners goes gaily on. A group of more critical character are commenting upon the last drama of Ponsard, or the last attraction at the Variétés; undisturbed by the proximity of a few other shopmates, who, amidst mingled humming and whistling, are trying to make out some half-remembered air from *Il Trovatore.* Two or three, whose phlegmatic aspects betray their nationality, are indulging in odd vocal reminiscences of Vaderland; and, as though there should be some proof that fog-land as well as cloud-land is duly represented here, another workman who stammers out his French with a genuine British accent, is boldly denying the assertion of a hero-worshipping Parisian that Hudson Lowe had *empoisonné notre grand homme.* Working away in silence—almost the only one who is doing so—we note a middle-aged individual, of a rather saddened and thoughtful look.

His history is not a cheerful, though a common one. In his youth, he dreamed of becoming a great artist; later, spent many years at Rome, Florence, Venice; returned to France, failed in his endeavours, met poverty face to face, and here he is, perpetrating silly fancies for a Manchester calico-printer, instead of embodying immortal imaginations on canvas! Another characteristic personage ought scarcely to be passed over—an unshaven fellow in a coarse blue blouse, who is grinding away on a large glass slab at a mass of ultramarine, an operation which he considers settles his claim to be ranked with *messieurs les artistes*. In literal truth, however, he is simply *garçon* of the establishment, to the duties of which humble position he gratuitously adds those of chief jester. On gastronomic themes he is almost as eloquent as the writer of the celebrated essay on *Roast Pig*, to credit which, it is only necessary to hear him expatiate upon the flavour of some smoked ham, which he managed to convey to Mont Parnasse from the cellars of the royal palace, just after the 'citizen king' had taken *French leave*. Unpatriotic gourmand!

The foregoing sketch—true to facts so far as it extends—may afford some idea of the confused conflux of national and provincial peculiarities, sentiments, creeds, and opinions which frequently characterise the design-ateliers of Paris. The discordant *tapage* of dialects and jargons in which all this material seeks and finds utterance, is certainly more embarrassing than auxiliary to a novice in the French language. Fortunately, in this respect at least, the writer—who was a practical designer in one of these ateliers for a long period—sat next to a young Parisian. Here, at least, was some chance of getting to hear a little undefiled French. But our *voisin*, though beardless, was deep in socialism; and would have babbled all day long in defence and explanation of phalansterianism, Fourierism, and other ingenious systems, had we not hinted to him now and then, as gently as possible, that he was a thorough 'bore.' Whether in silence, however, or noisy confusion—the latter seems to act as a stimulus rather than a hinderance—the varied kinds of design upon which these workmen are engaged are actively, steadily, and earnestly going on; novelties are being generated in swift succession; the tastes of civilised and uncivilised peoples, from the Seine to the Ganges, from St Petersburg to the Brazils, are being thoroughly and cleverly catered to. Nowhere do workmen go through their appointed labour with more cheerfulness and good-will, or with more ease and ready manipulative skill. The facility with which they pass from one class of tastes to another is really surprising. At one time they will dash off a design which, for gaudiness of colour and uncouthness of form, is precisely calculated to throw the veriest 'Villikins and his Dinah' into raptures; and then immediately proceed to the execution of another, in every respect so entirely the reverse, that the most fastidious British matron could take no exception to it.

It is not within our present purpose to enter into any detailed description of the work in which French designers are engaged, and in which they so undeniably excel; but a few observations upon the character of industrial design in general, as relating to one of the principal branches of our commercial enterprise, may not be uninteresting.

To make anything like a classification of the *styles* associated with designing for printed fabrics, would be a task from which a Linnæus might shrink. We may count upon our finger-ends all the recognised 'orders' of architecture; but it would be a far more intricate task to number all the orders and dis-orders of modern garment-printing. Look patiently at a few of the displays of some of the principal drapery establishments in St Paul's Church-yard, or Oxford Street; and you will soon find that the home-trade patterns and styles, for a single season only, are bewildering both in number and character. Twenty millions of pieces, it has been estimated, are printed annually in Great Britain; scarcely a fourth, however, of this vast quantity are required for home consumption. 'What a vast commercial supply!' some one may exclaim; 'what important applications of art and science! what a prodigious outlay both of money, wit, and labour, merely to cater to caprice!' And yet, the first mechanicians and chemists of England and the continent have been proud to contribute to the perfection of calico-printing. No branch of trade has availed itself to a more varied extent of the rapid progress of science. Many can easily remember when a pattern of two or three colours was printed slowly by hand, with wooden blocks, and sold at 8s. *per yard;* now, a pattern of a much more complicated character, and far more beautiful both in design and execution, is thrown off at the rate of a mile of calico in an hour, and sold at—3s. *per dress!* To return: different nations have tastes as widely differing from each other as their laws, creeds, or climate. An acquaintance with the history of the styles executed in a single Parisian atelier, would afford a very fair index of the stationary, progressive, or changing character of the countries for which they are intended. Most of those exported—that is, in the form of printed goods—to China, some parts of British India, South America, and many other remote quarters of the globe, have scarcely undergone any change or modification since the time when the ancestors of the present Sir Robert Peel conducted one of the first print-works introduced into North Lancashire. A new combination of forms or colours, or a new class of designs, would be as great a shock to the conservatism of the Chinese, as an attempt to prevail upon them to adopt household suffrage.

The most striking modifications and improvements in these respects, in connection with any of the places to which printed fabrics are exported, are to be found in the states and countries supplied through the Levantine market. The old yellow-ground and fantastic cashmere forms—far inferior to, though no doubt borrowed from the cashmeres of India—which not long ago constituted the only style patronised in this market, now hold company with many others of a totally different class—some of them such as are successful to a great extent in the English home-trade. The most complete manifestation, however, of these tendencies is to be found among the less passive nations of Western Europe and the Anglo-Saxon populations of North America. Here, society is undergoing continual transformations, submitting itself to new influences, casting off old tastes and preferences, or, rather, never allowing any to become old. Change is sought, novelty demanded, not because they always involve progression, but simply for their own sake. Fashion, indeed, is one of the truest characteristics of modern civilisation—an unquestionable result, though a questionable auxiliary. It acknowledges no authority itself, though it obtains unconditional allegiance. In the very heart and centre of the most refined and intelligent communities, it plays its least pardonable freaks, and passes from caprice to caprice with a most abandoned and unshackled disregard of the criticism to which it may be subjected. We will close this article by noticing one of the absurdities which it sanctioned in reference to printed fabrics, though instances far more striking, perhaps, might be brought forward from other departments over which fashion exercises an equally powerful influence.

Indeed, it would be a harder task than some lords of creation think, to tell where this influence is not exercised. We have a theory—a crotchet, if you will—not to be entered into at present, which inclines us to believe that fashion has about as much to do with the last new novel from Mudie's, be it romance, history, poetry, criticism, or even metaphysics, as with the last new robe from Madame de ——, though it be *le jupon à tube d'air*. To our story, however. A few seasons ago, a great novelty, or what was considered such, appeared in the French furniture and paper-hangings. It consisted in the introduction of landscape forms and effects, generally in large isolated masses, which, repeating along the piece at regular intervals, presented the appearance of so many islands—in fact, a complete archipelago. Without any consideration of its inappropriateness, and simply for the sake of a little novelty, this idea of 'gems of the sea' was applied to garments, under the fascinating title—in which matters the Parisians are thorough adepts—of *Les Isles d'Amour*. Dresses of every variety of material were to be seen dotted over with trees, lakes, valleys, and mountains, which—excepting of course the fair wearers—were pitiably unbewitching to behold. Sometimes the fancy of the designer led him to depict various little Arcadian scenes and hypothetical Edens, where there was no end of terraces, vases of flowers, shady recesses, leafy arches, fountains, *feu d'artifices*, and all the usual elegant prettinesses which complete the Parisian conception of a terrestrial paradise. The huddled, jostled, and broken appearance which such compositions presented when seen, not on a flat surface, but in the changing folds of a dress with two or three flounces, was more than a weak vision could long sustain without feeling as though terra firma was becoming unusually insecure. A little later on, this extravagance was brought to a close by a peroration, which, however it may claim to have been suggested by patriotic feelings, was an equal burlesque of taste. Shawls were selected as the medium of this grand *finale*. Over their broad surfaces—which undoubtedly admitted of a more comprehensible display—were scattered faithful delineations of various edifices, citadels, and strongholds of war, but more particularly of Russian fortresses. Of these latter, a facetious contemporary observed, that they were not only 'taken,' but 'walked off' with in a style that must vastly have humiliated our then brave defenders in the east. In justice, we ought to state that, except in paper-hangings, to which such applications were most suited, these ludicrous manifestations of taste were not transferred to this country.

THE GREAT MR WICKHAM.

An intelligent French nobleman, who visited this country at the latter end of the seventeenth century, gives us the following interesting account of a most remarkable impostor, the details of whose achievements, it would appear, came under the narrator's own knowledge. His book of travels was translated into English, and published in 1719 (nearly thirty years subsequent to his sojourn among us); and this work is the more valuable, as a picture of the times, that the translator, John Ozell, also the translator of Rabelais, eulogises the fidelity of his descriptions in the warmest manner—saying: 'Whenever our author mentions things of fact, he doth it with wonderful exactness and knowledge of the truth,' &c.; so that the following extracts may not be considered devoid of interest.

The history is introduced *àpropos* of funerals, some of the details respecting which are curious enough to be mentioned here:

There is, it seems, says the author, an act of parliament which ordayns that the dead shall be bury'd in a woollen stuff, which they do call flannel, nor is it indeed lawful to use the least needlefull of thread or silk. [The intention of this act is for the encouragement of woollen manufacture.] The *shift* is always white. To make these is a particular trade, and there be many that sell nothing else, so that these habits for the dead are always to be had ready made, of what size or price you please, for people of every age and sex. After they have wash'd the body clean and shaved it, they put it on the flannel-shift, which hath commonly sleeves purfled at the wrists, and the slit down the breast done finely in the same manner. When that these ornaments are not of woollen lace, they are at least edged, and ofttimes embroidered with black thread. The shift should be a foot longer than the body, that the feet be wrapped in it as in a bag. When they have thus folded the end of this flannel shift, they tie the part that is folded down with a piece of woollen thread, as we do our stockings, so that the end of the garment is done into a kind of a tuft. Upon the head they put a woollen cap, which they fasten with a very broad chin bands; then gloves upon the hands, and a handsome cravat around the neck, and all of woollen. That the body may lie the softer, most do put a layer of bran of four inches thick at the bottom of the coffin. The women wear a peculiar head-dress, with a forehead cloth. The body being thus equipped, it is visited a second time by the authorities, to see that it be bury'd in flannel, and that nothing about it is sowen with thread. They let it lay three or four days in this condition. They send the beadel with a list of such friends and relations as they have a mind to invite; and, indeed, the better sort do send printed tickets of invitation, which they leave at their houses. A little before the whole company is set in order for the march, they lay the body in the coffin, upon two stools, in a room, where all that please may go see it; then they do take off the top of the coffin, and remove from the face a little square bit of flannel. . . . . The relations and chief mourners are in a chamber apart, with their most intimate friends, and the rest of the guests are dispersed in the several rooms about the house. When that they are ready to set out, they nail up the coffin, and a servant presents the company with sprigs of rosemary; every one takes a sprig, and bears it in his hand along the street, till the body is put into the grave, at which time they do all together throw their sprigs in after it.

Before they set out, and on their return, it is usual to give the guests drink, and much of red and white wine, boiled with sugar and cinnamon. Butler, the keeper of the Crown and Sceptre in St Martins Street, told me himself that there was a tun of red port drank at his wifes burial, besides of mulled white wine. *Note.*—No men ever go to womens funerals, nor the women to mens; so that I find there were none but women at the drinking of Butler's wine. Indeed, such women in England will hold it out with the men, when they have a bottle before them, and also tattle infinitely better than they. . . . . Then they return again in the same order that they came, and drink again before they go home. . . . . It must be remembered that I always speak of middling people, among whom the customs of a people are most truly to be learned. . . . . Among persons of quality, it is customary to embalm the body, and to expose it for more than a fortnight on a bed of state.

Many of the obsolete customs here detailed may be observed in Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress*, the last of the series, where the wretched woman in her coffin is about to be carried to her last resting-place. They are all women who are assembled, the coffin-lid is open, and the face exposed to view. They are drinking, and each has her sprig of rosemary in her hand; and the mortuary head-cloth, described as peculiar to women in the seventeenth century, may be observed on the forehead of Hogarth's corpse.

The article of *funerals*, proceeds our author, puts me in mind of that of the pretended Mr Wickham, who dyed at London about six years ago, 1691, and whose history I must give you, by way of digression, believing that it cannot be unpleasant.

A good likely sort of rogue, that had been many years footman to a rich gentleman at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, call'd *Wickham*, came to London, and took him lodgings at a rich bakers over against Arundel Street in the Strand. He asked the baker what countryman he was, who straight reply'd from Banbury; and the rogue resolved to feign to be the great Mr Wickham, was mightily fond of the baker, calling him his countryman, and adding, that since he was of Banbury, he must needs know Mr Wickham. The baker, tho' he had been absent from Banbury fifteen or twenty years, was very glad to hear newes of it, and indeed perfectly overjoyed when he was told that the very man he was talking to was Mr Wickham himself. This produces great respect on the part of the baker, and new condescensions from the sham Wickham; nay, the family must be called up, that Mr Wickham might see them—ay! and they must drink a glass together, and smoake a pipe. The baker did not in the least doubt his having the great Mr Wickham for a lodger; and yet he could not but marvel to see him without a footman or portmantle, he therefore makes bold to ask him how a man of his estate came to be so unattended. The rogue, making of a sign to him to speak softly, told him that his servants were in a place where he could find them when he wanted them, but that at present he must be very careful of being known, because he came up to town to arrest a great merchant of London, who owed him much monies, and was just going to break; also, that he did desire to be incognito for feare that he should miss his stroke, and so indeed begged that the baker would not mention his name. Next day, he went abroad to take his measures with a comrade of his own stamp, and it was concluded that this latter should appear as Mr Wickham's servant, and come privily from time to time at night to attend upon his master. That very night he came; and the sham Wickham, looking at his own dirty neckcloth in the glass, was in a great rage at him for letting him be without money, linnen, or ought else by his negligence in not *bearing of his box to the waggon in due time, which would cause a delay of more than three days.* All this was said that the baker might hear it, who hereupon runs immediately to his drawers, and carries Mr Wickham the best linnen he had, begging him to honor him so much as to wear it, and at the same time lays down fifty guineas upon the table, that he might do him the favor to accept them also. He at first refused, but with much ado was prevailed upon.

As soon as he had got this money, he made up a livery of the same colours as the true Mr Wickham, gave it unto another pretended footman, and also brought a box of goods, as coming from the Banbury waggon. The honest baker, more satisfy'd than ever that he had to do with Mr Wickham, and consequently with one of the richest and noblest gentlemen in the kingdom, made it more and more his business to give him fresh marks of his respect and most zealous affection. To be short, Wickham made shift to milk him of one hundred and fifty guineas (besides the fifty) in a very few days, for which he gave him his note.

It was scarcely three weeks from the beginning of this adventure, all which time he had properly plundered the baker, and no doubt was preparing for some crowning villainy, when this rogue was lording it at a tavern, he was seized with a most serious illness. He got home to bed, where he was waited on by his pretended footman, and again assisted in everything by the good baker, who passed his word to the doctors, apothecaries, and to everybody else: indeed, he was visited by Dr Smith and Dr Lowther, two of the most eminent physicians in London.

Meanwhile, Wickham grew worse and worse, and about the fifth day he was given over.

Wickham heard the newes as tho' he had been the best Christian in the world, and fully prepared for death. He desired a minister might be sent for, and received the communion the same day. Never was there more piety, zeal, or confidence in the merits of Christ. Next day, the danger encreasing very much, the impostor told the baker, who was edified to tears at the condition of his noble friend, that it was not enough to take care of his soul, he ought also to set his worldly affairs in order, and so desired that he might make his will, while he was yet sound of mind. A scrivener, therefore, was immediately sent for, and his will made and signed in all the forms, and before several witnesses. Wickham by this disposed of all his estate, real and personal, jewells, coaches, teams, race-horses of such and such colours [all specified], packs of hounds, ready money, with his house, with all its appurtenances and dependencies to the baker; almost all his linnen to the wife; 500 guineas to the eldest son; 800 to the four daughters; 200 to the parson that had comforted him in his sickness; 200 to each of the doctors; and 100 to the apothecary; 50 guineas and mourning to each of his faithful footmen; 50 to embalm him; 50 for his coffin alone; 200 to hang the house with mourning, and to defray the rest of the charges of interment; 200 guineas for gloves, gold-rings, and scarves and hat-bands; and then such a diamond to such a friend, and such an emerald unto another. Nothing more noble—nothing more generous. All this done, Wickham called the baker to him, loaded him and all his family with benedictions, and presently after my gentleman falls into convulsions and dyes.

The baker at first thought of nothing but of burying him with all the pomp imaginable, according to the will, so he hung all the rooms in his house, the staircase, and the entry with mourning-cloth; he gave orders for the making the clothes, the coffin, the rings, &c.; he sent for the embalmer; in a word, he omitted nothing; and having drained his purse to the last, he was in turn forced to borrow to buy little necessaries for this grand funeral.

Wickham was not to be buried till the fourth day after his death, and everything was, it seems, got ready by the second. The baker had now time to go seek for the lawyer the dead rogue had at the last referred him to, before he put him in the ground; so, after his having reverently put the body into a rich coffin, covered with velvet and huge plates of silver, which, indeed, all the town did afterward flock to see, he went to this lawyer, who was, in fact, really lawyer to the true Mr Wickham, and he was, indeed, strangely surprised to hear of the death of Mr Wickham, whom, it seems, he had heard of but the day before; but we may easily imagine that the poor baker was far more surprised when he found that in all liklyhood he was bit. To conclude, the baker was ere long convinced that the true Mr Wickham was in perfect health, and that the rogue he had taken for him was the most clever consistent villain and compleat hypocrite that ever lived.

Upon this he immediately turned the body out of the rich coffin, which he sold for a third part of what it cost him. It might have fetched more if it had not been made scandalous by the body that had been enclosed in it. All the tradesmen that had been employed towards the buriall had compassion on the baker; and, indeed, some took their things again, tho' not without great loss to him. He himself pulled off his fine mourning, and donned again his old mealy coat; and they dug at night a hole in Saint Clements Churchyard, where they did throw in the body with as little of ceremony as possible.

I was an eyewitness of most of the things which I have here related, and I shall leave the reader to make his own reflections upon them; and I have since been assured, from several hands, that the baker hath since had his great losses pretty well made up to him by the generosity of the true Mr Wickham, for whose sake the honest baker had been so open-hearted.

This curious instance of the ruling passion strong in death is equalled in one of Marryat's novels; where a habitual liar and boaster in his last moments leaves to his friends by will a variety of rich and elegant bequests which had never any existence but in his own imagination. The stage is fertile in instances of a similar power of imagination. It is related of a popular actor of a former day, who was celebrated for his impersonations of George III., that he was on one occasion so carried away with the enthusiasm of his part, as well as with strong drink, that he acknowledged the applause of the audience with his hand to his heart, tears in his eyes, and 'God bless ye!—God bless ye, my children!'

Another actor, at a transpontine theatre, was remarkable for his personification of the first Napoleon; and his resemblance in person to the departed Corsican increased the hearty plaudits with which he was always greeted when he enacted this part. On such nights, he carried the histrionic illusion into which he had worked himself at the foot-lights to the *arrière scène*, and in the green-room he was not to be approached: he was 'gloomy, and grand,' absent, sententious, and curt; he strode up and down, twirling his snuff-box between his fingers, his hands being duly folded Napoleonically behind his back; and thus he remained for an hour or two in a haze of empire and glory.

It is well known that a person feigning madness for a lengthened period may become permanently insane; and on this principle we may account for 'the good likely sort of rogue' who personated 'the great Mr Wickham,' continuing his audacious deception to the very last, and actually dying in the part he had assumed, in the odour of piety and Christian resignation, and in the generous display of the most extraordinary and princely munificence.

A WOMAN'S THOUGHTS ABOUT WOMEN.

SELF-DEPENDENCE.

'IF you want a thing done, go yourself; if not, send.'

This pithy axiom, of which most men know the full value, is by no means so well appreciated by women. One of the very last things we learn, often through a course of miserable helplessness, heart-burnings, difficulties, contumelies, and pain, is the lesson, taught to boys from their school-days, of self-dependence.

Its opposite, either plainly or impliedly, has been preached to us all our lives. 'An independent young lady'—'a woman who can take care of herself'—and such-like phrases, have become tacitly suggestive of hoydenishness, coarseness, strong-mindedness, down to the lowest dress of bloomerism, cigarette-smoking, and talking slang.

And there are many good reasons, ingrained in the very tenderest core of woman's nature, why this should be. We are 'the weaker vessel'—whether acknowledging it or not, most of us feel this: it becomes man's duty and delight to shew us honour accordingly. And this honour, dear as it may be to him to give, is still dearer to us to receive.

Dependence is in itself an easy and pleasant thing: dependence upon one we love perhaps the very sweetest thing in the world. To resign one's self totally and contentedly into the hands of another; to have no longer any need of asserting one's rights or one's personality, knowing that both are as precious to that other as they ever were to ourselves; to cease taking thought about one's self at all, and rest safe, at ease, assured that in great things and small we shall be guided and cherished, guarded and helped—in fact, thoroughly 'taken care of'—how delicious is all this! So delicious, that it seems granted to very few of us, and to fewer still as a permanent condition of being.

Were it our ordinary lot, were every woman living to have either father, brother, or husband, to watch over and protect her, then, indeed, the harsh but salutary doctrine of self-dependence need never be heard of. But it is not so. In spite of the pretty ideals of poets, the easy taking-for-granted truths of anti-woman's-rights educators of female youth, this fact remains patent to any person of common sense and experience, that in the present day, whether voluntarily or not, one-half of our women are *obliged* to take care of themselves—obliged to look solely to themselves for maintenance, position, occupation, amusement, reputation, life.

Of course I refer to the large class for which these thoughts are meant—the single women; who, while most needing the exercise of self-dependence, are usually the very last in whom it is inculcated, or even permitted. From babyhood they are given to understand that helplessness is feminine and beautiful; helpfulness,—except in certain received forms of manifestation—unwomanly and ugly. The boys may do a thousand things which are 'not proper for little girls.'

And herein, I think, lies the great mistake at the root of most women's education, that the law of their existence is held to be, not right, but 'propriety.' A certain received notion of womanhood, which has descended from certain excellent great-grandmothers, admirable in its way, and suited for some sorts of women, but totally ignoring the fact that each sex is composed of individuals, differing in character almost as much from one another as from the opposite sex—some men being womanish, and some women masculine—and perhaps the finest types of either combining the qualities of both—and that, therefore, to deal justly, there must be set up a standard of abstract right, including manhood and womanhood, and yet superior to either. One of the first of its common laws, or common duties, is this of self-dependence.

We women are, no less than men, each of us a distinct existence. In two out of the three great facts of our life, we are certainly independent, and all our life long are accountable only, in the highest sense, to our own souls and the Maker of them. Is it natural—is it right even, that we should be expected—and be ready enough, too, for it is much the easiest way—to hang our consciences, duties, actions, opinions, upon some one else—some individual man, or some aggregate of mankind yclept society? Is this society to draw up a code of regulations as to what we are to do, and what not? Which latter is supposed to be done for us; if not done, or there happens to be no one to do it, is it to be left undone? And, alack, most frequently whether or not it ought to be, it is.

Every one's experience may furnish dozens of cases of poor women suddenly thrown adrift—widows with families, orphan girls, reduced gentlewomen—clinging helplessly to the skirts of every male relative or friend they have, sinking pitiably year after year, eating the bitter bread of charity, or compelled to bow an honest pride to hardest humiliations—every one of which might have been spared them by the early practice of self-dependence.

I once heard a lady say—a tenderly reared and tender-hearted woman—that if her riches made themselves wings, as in these times riches will, she did not know anything in the world that she could turn her hand to, to keep herself from starving. A more pitiable, and, in some sense, humiliating confession, could hardly have been made; yet it is that not of hundreds, but of thousands, in England.

Sometimes exceptions arise: here is one:

Three young women, well educated and refined, were left orphans, their father dying just when his business promised to realise a handsome provision for his family. It was essentially a man's business—in many points of view, decidedly an unpleasant one. Of course, friends thought 'the girls' must give it up, go out as governesses, depend on relatives, or live in what genteel poverty the sale of the good-will might allow. But 'the girls' were wiser. They argued: 'If we had been boys, it would have been all right; we should have carried on the business, and provided for our mother and the whole family. Being women, we'll try it still. It is nothing wrong; it is simply disagreeable. It needs common sense, activity, diligence, and self-dependence. We have all these; and what we have not, we will learn.' So these three elegant and well-informed women laid aside their pretty feminine uselessnesses and pleasant idlenesses, and set to work. Happily, the trade was one that required no personal publicity; but they had to keep the books, manage the stock, choose and superintend fit agents—to do things most difficult, not to say distasteful, to women, and resign enjoyments that, to women of their refinement, must have cost daily self-denial. Yet they did it; they filled their father's place, sustained their delicate mother in ease and luxury, never once compromising their womanhood by their work, but rather ennobling the work by their doing of it.

Another case—different, and yet alike. A young girl, an eldest sister, had to receive for step-mother, a woman who ought never to have been any honest man's wife. Not waiting to be turned out of her father's house, she did a most daring and 'improper' thing—she left it, taking with her the brothers and sisters, whom by this means only she believed she could save from harm. She settled them in a London lodging, and worked for them as a daily governess. 'Heaven helps those who help themselves:' from that day this girl never was dependent upon any human being; while during a long life she has helped and protected more than I could count—pupils and pupils' children, friends and their children, besides brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces, down to the slenderest tie of blood, or even mere strangers. And yet she has never been anything but a poor governess, always independent, always able to assist others—because she never was and never will be indebted to any one, except for love while she lives, and for a grave when she dies. May she long possess the one and want the other!

And herein is answered the '*cui bono?*' of self-dependence, that its advantages end not with the original possessor. In this much-suffering world, a woman who can take care of herself can always take care of other people. She not only ceases to be an unprotected female, a nuisance, and a drag on society, but her working-value therein is doubled and trebled, and society respects her accordingly. Even her kindly male friends, no longer afraid that when the charm to their vanity of 'being of use to a lady' has died out, they shall be saddled with a perpetual claimant for all manner of advice and assistance, the first not always followed, and the second often accepted without gratitude—even they yield an involuntary consideration to a lady who gives them no more trouble than she can avoid, and is always capable of thinking and acting for herself in all things—so far as the natural decorums of her sex allow. True, these have their limits, which it would be folly, if not worse, for her to attempt to pass; but a certain fine instinct, which, we flatter ourselves, is native to us women, will generally indicate the division between brave self-reliance and bold assumption.

Perhaps the line is easiest drawn, as in most difficulties, where duty ends and pleasure begins. We should respect one who, on a mission of mercy or necessity, went through the lowest portions of St Giles or the Gallowgate; we should be rather disgusted if she did it for mere amusement or bravado. All honour to the poor sempstress or governess who traverses London streets alone, at all hours of day or night, unguarded except by her own modesty; but the strong-minded female who would venture on a solitary expedition to investigate the humours of Cremorne Gardens or Greenwich fair, though perfectly 'respectable,' would be an exceedingly condemnable sort of personage. There are many things at which, as mere pleasures, a woman has a right to hesitate; there is no single duty, whether or not it lies in the ordinary line of her sex, from which she ought to shrink, if it is plainly set before her.

Those who are the strongest advocates for the passive character of our sex, its claims, proprieties, and restrictions, are, I have often noticed, if the most sensitive, not always the justest or most generous. I have seen ladies, no longer either young or pretty, shocked at the idea of traversing a street's length at night, yet never hesitate at being 'fetched' by some female servant, who was both young and pretty, and to whom the danger of the expedition, or of the late return alone, was by far the greater of the two. I have known anxious mothers, who would not for worlds be guilty of the indecorum of sending their daughters unchaperoned to the theatre or a ball—and very right, too!—yet send out some other woman's young daughter, at eleven P.M., to the stand for a cab, or to the public-house for a supply of beer. It never strikes them that the doctrine of female dependence extends beyond themselves, whom it suits so easily, and to whom it saves much trouble; that either every woman, be she servant or mistress, sempstress or fine lady, is to receive the 'protection' suitable to her degree; or that each is to be educated into a self-dependence, which will at least enable her to hold the balance of justice even, nor allow an over-delicacy for one woman to trench on the rights, conveniences, and honest feelings of another.

We *must* help ourselves. In this curious phase of social history, when marriage is apparently ceasing to become the common lot, and a happy marriage the most uncommon lot of all, we must educate our women into what is far better than any blind clamour for ill-defined 'rights'—into what ought always to be the foundation of rights—duties. And there is one, the silent practice of which will secure to them almost every right they can fairly need—the duty of self-dependence. Not after any amazonian fashion; no mutilating of fair womanhood in order to assume the unnatural armour of men; but simply by the full exercise of every faculty, physical, moral, and intellectual, with which Heaven has endowed women, severally and collectively, in different degrees; allowing no one to rust or lie idle, merely because their owner is a woman. And, above all, let us lay the foundation of all real womanliness by teaching our maidens from their cradle that the priceless pearl of decorous beauty, chastity of mind as well as body, exists in themselves alone; that a single-hearted and pure-minded woman may go through the world, like Spenser's Una, suffering, indeed, but never defenceless; foot-sore and smirched, but never tainted; exposed, doubtless, to many trials, yet never either degraded or humiliated, unless by her own act she humiliates herself.

For Heaven's sake—for the sake of 'womanhede,' the most heavenly thing next angelhood, as men tell us when they are courting us, and which it depends upon ourselves to make them believe in all their lives—young girls, trust yourselves; rely on yourselves! Be assured that no outward circumstances will harm you while you keep the jewel of purity in your bosom, and are ever ready with the steadfast, clean right hand, of which, till you use it, you never know the strength, though it be only a woman's hand.

Fear not the world: it is often juster to us than we are to ourselves. If in its harsh jostlings the 'weaker goes to the wall'—as so many allege always happens to a woman—you will almost always find that this is not merely because of her sex, but from some inherent qualities in herself, which, existing either in woman or man, would produce just the same result, usually more pitiful than blamable. The world is hard enough, for two-thirds of it are struggling for the dear life—'each for himself, and de'il tak the hindmost;' but it has a rough sense of moral justice after all. And whosoever denies that, spite of all hinderances from individual wickedness, *the right* shall not ultimately prevail, impugns not merely human justice, but the justice of God.

The age of chivalry, with all its benefits and harmfulnesses, is gone by, for us women. We cannot now have men for our knights-errant, expending blood and life for our sake, while we have nothing to do but sit idle on balconies, and drop flowers on half-dead victors at tilt and tourney. Nor, on the other hand, are we dressed-up dolls, pretty playthings, to be fought and scrambled for—petted, caressed, or flung out of window, as our several lords and masters may please. Life is much more equally divided between us and them. We are neither goddesses nor slaves; they are neither heroes nor semi-demons: we just plod on together, men and women alike, on the same road, where daily experience illustrates Hudibras's keen truth, that

The value of a thing
Is just as much as it will bring.

And our value is—exactly what we choose to make it.

Perhaps at no age since Eve's were women rated so exclusively at their own personal worth, apart from poetic flattery or unmanly depreciation; at no time in the world's history judged so entirely by their individual merits, and respected according to the respect which they earn for themselves. And shall we esteem ourselves so meanly as to consider this unjust? Shall we not rather accept our position, difficult indeed, and requiring from us more than the world ever required before; but from its very difficulty, rendered the most honourable?

Let us not be afraid of men; for that, I suppose, lies at the root of all these amiable hesitations. 'Gentlemen don't like such and such things.' 'Gentlemen fancy so and so unfeminine.' My dear little foolish cowards, do you think a man—a *good* man, in any relation of life, ever loves a woman the more for esteeming her the less? or likes her better for transferring all her burdens to his shoulders, and pinning her conscience to his sleeve? Or, even if he did like it, is a woman's divinity to be man—or God?

And here, piercing to the Foundation of all truth—I think we may find the truth concerning self-dependence, which is only real and only valuable when its root is not in self at all—when its strength is drawn not from man, but from that Higher and Diviner Source whence every individual soul proceeds, and to which alone it is accountable. As soon as any woman, old or young, once feels *that*, not as a vague sentimental belief, but as a tangible, practical law of life, all weakness ends, all doubt departs: she recognises the glory, honour, and beauty of her existence; she is no longer afraid of its pains; she desires not to shift one atom of its responsibilities to another. She is content to take it just as it is, from the hands of the All-Father; her only care being to so fulfil it, that while the world at large may recognise and profit by her self-dependence, she herself, knowing that the utmost strength lies in the deepest humility, recognises, solely and above all, her dependence upon God.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXVIII.—THE WOODS ON FIRE?

The trappers were not among those who had rescued me—where were they? The others made answer, though I already guessed what they had to tell. Rube and Garey had followed the tracks of the steed, leaving the rangers to come after me.

I was pleased with the ready intelligence of my comrades: they had acted exactly as they should have done. I was myself found, and I no longer entertained any apprehension that the trail would be lost.

By this time, the trappers must be far upon it; more than an hour had elapsed since they and the others had parted company. My zigzag path had cost my followers many a bewildering pause.

But they had not ridden recklessly as I, and could find their way back. As it was impossible to tell in what direction Rube and Garey had gone, this course was the best to be followed; and under the guidance of Stanfield, an expert woodsman, we commenced returning to the prairie. It was not necessary to follow back our own crooked trail. The Kentuckian had noted the 'lay' of the chapparal, and led us out of its labyrinths by an almost direct path.

On reaching the open prairie, we made no halt; but upon the tracks of Rube, Garey, and the steed, once more entered the chapparal.

We had no difficulty about our course; it was plainly traced out for us; the trappers had 'blazed' it. In most places, the tracks of the three horses were sufficient indices of the route; but there were stretches where the ground was stony, and upon the parched arid herbage, even the shod hoof left no visible mark. In such places, a branch of acacia broken and pendulous, the bent flower-stem of an aloe or the succulent leaves of the cactus slashed with a sharp knife, were conspicuous and unmistakable signs; and by the guidance of these we made rapid advance.

We must have gone much faster than the trackers themselves—for notwithstanding the freshness of the trail, there were dry spots and patches of cut rock over which it passed, and where it must have cost both time and keen perception to trace it.

As we were travelling so much more rapidly than Rube and Garey could have done, I looked forward to our soon overtaking them; with eager anticipation, I looked forward. Surely they would have some news for me, now that they had been so long in the advance? Surely by this time they must have come in sight of the steed?—perhaps captured him? O joyous anticipation!

Or would they return with a different tale? Was I to meet the report that he still hurried on—on for ever? That he had swum some rapid stream? or plunged over a precipice—into some dark abysm?

Though hastening on after the trackers, there were moments when I feared to overtake them—moments when I dreaded to hear their tale!

We had worked our way about five miles through the hideous jungle, when I began to feel a strange sensation in my eyes—a sensation of pain—what is usually termed a 'smarting.' I at first attributed it to the want of sleep. My companions complained that they were affected in a similar manner.

It was not until we had gone some distance farther, that we found the true explanation, by perceiving that there was *smoke upon the air!* Smoke it was that was causing the bitterness in our eyes.

The denizen of the prairie never regards such an indication with indifference. Where there is smoke, there is fire, and where fire, danger—at least upon the broad grassy steppes of the west. A burning forest may be shunned. You may stand near to the forest on fire, and contemplate such a scene with safety; but a blazing prairie is a phenomenon of a different character; and it is indeed a rare position where you may view, without peril, this sublime spectacle.

There are prairies that will not burn. The plains covered with the short 'buffalo-grass' (*sesleria dactyloides*), and the sward of various species of 'gramma' (*chondrosium*), rarely take fire; or if they do, horse, man, buffalo, or antelope, can easily escape by leaping across the blaze. 'Tis only the reptile world—snakes, lizards, the toad, and the land-turtle (*terrapin*)—that fall victims to such a flame.

Not so upon the 'weed-prairies,' or those where the tall reed-grass rises above the withers of a horse—its culms matted and laced together by the trailing stems of various species of bindweed, by creeping convolvulus, cucurbitaceæ, and wild pea-vines. In the dry season, when a fire lays its hold upon vegetation of this character, there is danger indeed—where it rages, there is death.

It was smoke that affected our eyes, causing them to smart and water. Fire must be causing the smoke—what was on fire? I could detect apprehension in the looks of my followers, as we rode on. It was but slight, for as yet the smoke was scarcely perceptible, and the fire, wherever it was, must be distant—so fancied we.

As we advanced, the glances of the men became more uneasy. Beyond a doubt, the smoke was thickening around us—the sky was fast becoming darker, and the pain in our eyes more acute.

'The woods are on fire,' said Stanfield.

Stanfield was a backwoodsman—his thoughts ran upon 'woods.'

Whether forest or prairie, a conflagration was certainly raging. It might be far off, for the wind will carry the smoke of a prairie-fire a long distance; but I had an unpleasant suspicion that it was *not* distant. I noticed dropping around us the white floe of burnt leaves, and from the intense bitterness of the smoke, I reasoned that it could not have floated far—its gases were not yet dissipated.

It was not the distance of the fire that so much troubled me, as its direction. The wind blew right in our teeth, and the smoke was travelling with the wind. The conflagration must be ahead—directly upon the trail!

The smoke grew thicker and thicker—ahead, the sky appeared slashed with a lurid light; I fancied I could hear the crackling of the flames. The air felt hot and dry: a choking sensation came into our throats, and one and all were soon hacking and gasping for breath.

So dark had it suddenly become, or rather, so blinded were we with the smoke, we could scarcely make out the trail.

My followers would have stopped, but I urged them on. With voice and example, I urged them on—myself leading the way. My heart was too sore to make pause.

Where in all this were Rube and Garey? We had come far and fast; we should now be nearly up with them—they could not be much ahead.

I halloed as we advanced.

'Hullow!' came the response, in the rough baritone of the younger trapper.

We hurried forward in the direction of the voice. The path conducted to an opening in the chapparal, in the centre of which, through the smoke, we could distinguish the forms of men and horses.

With eager eyes, I scanned the group; a glance was sufficient: there were *only two* of each—only the trackers.

CHAPTER LXIX.

SMOKE AND THIRST.

'Ah, Monsieur Roob!' cried the Canadian, as we hurried up, 'vat make ce de la diable d'une fumée—smoke? Are ze woods on fire—you tink—eh?'

'Wuds!' exclaimed Rube, with a contemptuous glance at the speaker. 'Wagh! Thur's no wuds hyur. Thur's a paraira afire. Don't ee smell the stink o' the grass?'

'Pe gar, oui! vraiment—c'est la prairie? You sure, Monsieur Roob?'

'Sure!' vociferated the trapper in a tone of indignation—'Sure!—ye durned parley-voo-eat-a-frog, spit-a-brick, soup-suckin Frenchman, d'yur think I don't know the smell o' a burnin paraira? Wagh!'

'Ah, Monsieur Roob, me pardon. Vat I mean ask—is ze chapparal brulé—on fire—ces arbres?'

'The chapparil ain't afire,' answered Rube, somewhat mollified by the apology: 'so don't be skeeart, Frenchy; yur safe enuf.'

This assurance seemed to gratify not only the timid Canadian, but others, who, up to this moment, were apprehensive that it was the thicket that was on fire.

For myself, I had no such fears; I perceived that the chapparal could not burn. Here and there, patches of dry mezquite-trees would have caught like tinder; but in most places, a succulent endogenous vegetation formed three parts of the jungle, and rendered it 'fire-proof.' This was especially the case around the glade where the trappers had taken their stand, and which was completely enclosed by a wall of the great organ cactus, with aloes, opuntias, and other juicy-leaved plants. In the opening, we were as safe from the fire as though it was a hundred miles off; we suffered only from the smoke, that now quite filled the atmosphere, causing a darkness that rivalled night.

I had no apprehension for *our* safety; it was not of that I was thinking.

To the hasty dialogue between Rube and the Canadian I had scarcely given heed; Garey had advanced to meet me, and I listened with anxious ear to the tale of the tracker.

It was soon told. Rube and he had followed the trail, until it emerged from the chapparal, and struck out into a wide grass-prairie. The edge of the thicket was close by; but they had gone a considerable distance beyond it and across the plain. They were still advancing, when, to their consternation, they perceived that the prairie was on fire directly ahead of them! The wind was rolling both smoke and flames before it with the rapidity of a running horse, and it was with difficulty they escaped from it by galloping back to the chapparal.

And the steed—what had become of him? Had they seen nothing?

I did not put these questions in words—only in thought did I ask them; and in thought only were they answered. Both the trackers were silent, and that was an answer in the negative; yes, I read an ominous negative in their looks of gloom.

We were compelled to halt; even the smoke rendered further progress impossible; but we could hear the fire at no great distance—the culms of the coarse reed-grass cracking like volleys of musketry.

Now and then, a scared deer broke through the bushes, passing us at full speed. A band of antelope dashed into the glade, and halted close beside us—the frightened creatures not knowing where to run. At their heels came a pack of prairie-wolves, but not in pursuit of them: these also stopped near. A black bear and a cougar arrived next; and fierce beasts of prey and gentle ruminants stood side by side, both terrified out of their natural habits. Birds shrieked among the branches, eagles screamed in the air, and black vultures could be seen hovering through the smoke, with no thought of stooping upon a quarry!

The hunter man alone preserved his instincts. My followers were hungry. Rifles were levelled—and the bear and one of the antelopes fell victims to the deadly aim.

Both were soon stripped of their skins, and butchered. A fire was kindled in the glade, and upon sword-blades and sapling spits the choice morsels of venison and 'bear-meat' were roasted, and eaten, with many a jest about the 'smoky kitchen.'

I was myself hungered. I shared the repast, but not the merriment. At that moment, no wit could have won from me a smile; the most luxurious table could not have furnished me with cheer.

A worse appetite than hunger assailed my companions, and I felt it with the rest—it was thirst: for hours all had been suffering from it; the long hard ride had brought it on, and now the smoke and the dry hot atmosphere increased the appetite till it had grown agonising, almost unendurable. No water had been passed since the stream we had crossed before day; there was none in the chapparal; the trackers saw none so far as they had gone: we were in a waterless desert; and the very thought itself renders the pang of thirst keener and harder to endure.

Some chewed their leaden bullets, or pebbles of chalcedony which they had picked up; others obtained relief by drinking the blood of the slaughtered animals—the bear and the antelope—but we found a better source of assuagement in the succulent stems of the cactus and agave.

The relief was but temporary: the juice cooled our lips and tongues, but there is an acrid principle in these plants that soon acted, and our thirst became more intense than ever.

Some talked of returning on the trail in search of water—of going back even to the stream—more than twenty miles distant.

Under such circumstances, even military command loses its authority. Nature is stronger than martial law.

I cared not if they did return; I cared not who left me, so long as the trappers remained true. I had no fear that they would forsake me; and my disapprobation of it checked the cheerless proposal, and once more all declared their willingness to go on.

Fortunately, at that crisis the smoke began to clear away, and the atmosphere to lighten up. The fire had burnt on to the edge of the chapparal, where it was now opposed by the sap-bearing trees. The grass had been all consumed—the conflagration was at an end.

Mounting our horses, we rode out from the glade; and following the trail a few hundred yards farther, we emerged from the thicket, and stood upon the edge of the desolated plain.

CHAPTER LXX.

A BURNT PRAIRIE.

The earth offers no aspect more drear and desolate than that of a burnt prairie. The ocean when its waves are gray—a blighted heath—a flat fenny country in a rapid thaw—all these impress the beholder with a feeling of chill monotony; but the water has motion, the heath, colour, and the half-thawed flat exhibits variety in its mottling of white and ground.

Not so the steppe that has been fired and burned. In this, the eye perceives neither colour, nor form, nor motion. It roams over the limitless level in search of one or other, but in vain; and in the absence of all three, it tires, and the heart grows cheerless and sick. Even the sky scarcely offers relief. It, too, by refraction from the black surface beneath, wears a dull livid aspect; or perhaps the eye, jaundiced by the reflection of the earth, beholds not the brightness of the heavens.

A prairie, when green, does not always glad the eye—not even when enamelled with fairest flowers. I have crossed such plains, verdant or blooming to the utmost verge of vision, and longed for *something* to appear *in sight*—a rock, a tree, a living creature—anything to relieve the universal sameness; just as the voyager on the ample ocean longs for ships, for *cetaceæ*, or the sight of land, and is delighted with a nautilus, polypi, phosphorescence, or a floating weed.

Colour alone does not satisfy the sense. What hue more charming than the fresh verdure of the grassy plain? what more exquisite than the deep blue of the ocean? and yet the eye grows weary of both! Even the 'flower-prairie,' with its thousands of gay corollas of every tint and shade—with its golden helianthus, its white argemone, its purple cleome, its pink malvaceæ, its blue lupin—its poppyworts of red and orange—even these fair tints grow tiresome to the sight, and the eye yearns for form and motion.

If so, what must be the prairie when divested of all its verdant and flowery charms—when burned to black ashes? It is difficult to conceive the aspect of dreary monotony it then presents—more difficult to describe it. Words will not paint such a scene.

And such presented itself to our eyes as we rode out from the chapparal. The fire was past—even the smoke had ceased to rise, except in spots where the damp earth still reeked under the heat; but right and left, and far ahead, on to the very hem of the horizon, the surface was of one uniform hue, as if covered with a vast crape. There was nought of form to be seen, living or lifeless; there was no life or motion, even in the elements; all sounds had ceased: an awful stillness reigned above and around—the world seemed dead and shrouded in its sable pall!

Under other circumstances, I might have stayed to regard such a scene, though not to admire it. On that interminable waste, there was nought to be admired, not even sublimity; but no spectacle however sublime, however beautiful, could have won from me a thought at that moment.

The trackers had already ridden far out, and were advancing, half concealed by the cloud of black 'stoor' flung up from the heels of their horses. For some distance, they moved straight on without looking for the tracks of the steed. Before meeting the fire, they had gone beyond the edge of the chapparal; after a while, I observed them moving more slowly, with their eyes upon the ground as if looking for the trail. I had doubts of their being able either to find or follow it now. The shallow hoof-prints would be filled with the débris of the burnt herbage—surely they could no longer be traced?

By myself, they could not, nor by a common man; but it seemed that to the eyes of those keen hunters, the trail was as conspicuous as ever. I saw that, after searching a few seconds, they had taken it up, and were once more moving along, guided by the tracks. Some slight hollows I could perceive, distributed here and there over the ground, and scarcely distinguishable from the surrounding level. Certainly, without having been told what they were, I should not have known them to be the tracks of a horse.

It proved a wide prairie, and we seemed to be crossing its central part. The fire had spread far.

At one place, nearly midway, where the trail was faint, and difficult to make out, we stopped for a short while to give the trackers time. A momentary curiosity induced me to gaze around. Awful was the scene—awful without sublimity. Even the thorny chapparal no longer relieved the eye; the outline of its low shrubbery had sunk below the horizon, and on all sides stretched the charred plain up to the rim of the leaden canopy, black—black—illimitable. Had I been alone, I might easily have yielded to the fancy, that the world was dead.

Gazing over this vast opacity, I for a moment forgot my companions, and fell into a sort of lethargic stupor. I fancied that I too was dead or dreaming—I fancied that I was in hell—the Avernus of the ancients. In my youth, I had the misfortune to be well schooled in classic lore, to the neglect of studies that are useful; and often in life have the poetical absurdities of Greek and Latin mythology intruded themselves upon my spirit—both asleep and awake. I fancied, therefore, that some well-meaning Anchises had introduced me to the regions below; and that the black plain before me was some landscape in the kingdom of Pluto. Reflection—had I been capable of that—would have convinced me of my error. No part of that monarch's dominions can be so thinly peopled.

I was summoned to reason again by the voices of my followers. The lost trail had been found, and they were moving on.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE TALK OF THE TRACKERS.

I spurred after, and soon overtook them. Regardless of the dust, I rode close in the rear of the trackers, and listened to what they were saying.

These 'men of the mountains'—as they prided to call themselves—were peculiar. While engaged in a duty, such as the present, they would scarce disclose their thoughts, even to me; much less were they communicative with the rest of my following, whom they were accustomed to regard as 'greenhorns'—their favourite appellation for all men who have not made the tour of the grand prairies. Notwithstanding that Stanfield and Black were backwoodsmen and hunters by profession, Quackenboss a splendid shot, Le Blanc a regular '*voyageur*,' and the others more or less skilled in woodcraft, all were greenhorns in the opinion of the trappers. To be otherwise, a man must have starved upon a 'sage-prairie'—'run' buffalo by the Yellowstone or Platte—fought 'Injun,' and shot Indian—have well-nigh lost scalp or ears—spent a winter in Pierre's Hole upon Green River—or camped amid the snows of the Rocky Mountains! Some one of all these feats must needs have been performed ere the 'greenhorn' can matriculate and take rank as a 'mountain man.'

I of all my party was the only one who, in the eyes of Rube and Garey, was *not* a greenhorn; and even I—gentleman-amateur that I was—was hardly up either in their confidence or their 'craft.' It is indeed true—with all my classic accomplishments, with my fine words, my fine horse, and fine clothes—so long as we were within the limits of prairie-land, I acknowledged these men as my superiors. They were my guides, my instructors, my masters.

Since overtaking them on the trail, I had not asked them to give any opinion. I dreaded a direct answer—for I had noticed something like a despairing look in the eyes of both.

As I followed them over the black plain, however, I thought that their faces brightened a little, and appeared once more lit up by a faint ray of hope. For that reason, I rode close upon their heels, and eagerly caught up every word that was passing between them. Rube was speaking when I first drew near.

'Wagh! I don't b'lieve it, Bill; 'taint possyble nohow-so-ever. The paraira wur sot afire—must 'a been; thur's no other ways for it. It cudn't 'a tuk to bleezin o' itself—eh?'

'Sartinly not; I agree wi' you, Rube.'

'Wal—thur wur a fellur as I met oncest at Bent's Fort on the Arkinsaw—a odd sort o' a critter he wur, an no mistake; he us't to go pokin about, gatherin weeds an all sorts o' green garbitch, an spreadin 'em out atween sheets o' paper—whet he called button-eyesin—jest like thet ur Dutch doctur as wur rubbed out when we went into the Navagh country, t' other side o' the Grand.'

'I remembers him.'

'Wal, this hyur fellur I tell 'ee about, he us't to talk mighty big o' this, thet, an t' other; an he palavered a heap 'bout a thing thet, ef I don't disremember, wur called *spuntaynyus kumbuxshun*.'

'I 've heerd o' 't; that are the name.'

'Wal, the button-eyeser, he sayed thet a paraira mout take afire o' itself, 'ithout anybody whatsomdiver hevin sot it. Now, thet ur's what this child don't b'lieve, nohow. In coorse, I knows thet lightnin sometimes may sot a paraira a bleezin, but lightnin 's a natral fire o' itself; an it 's only reezunible to expect thet the dry grass wud catch from *it* like punk; but I shed like to know how fire kud kindle by itself—thet 's whet I shed like to know.'

'I don't believe it can,' rejoined Garey.

'Ne'er a bit o' it. I never seed a burnin paraira yit, thet thur wa'n't eyther a camp-fire or a Injun at the bottom o' it—thet ur 'ceptin whur lightnin hed did the bizness.'

'And you think, Rube, thar 's been Injun at the bottom o' this?'

'Putty nigh sure; an I'll gie you my reezuns. Fust, do 'ee see thur 's been no lightnin this mornin to 'a made the fire? Seconds, it 's too fur west hyur for any settlement o' whites—in coorse I speak o' Texans—thur might be Mexikins; them I don't call white, nohow nosomediver. An then, agin, it kin scarce be Mexikins neyther. It ur too fur no'th for any o' the yellur bellies to be a strayin jest now, seein as it 's the *Mexikin moon* wi' the Kimanchees, an both them an the Leepans ur on the war-trail. Wal, then, it's clur thur's no Mexikin 'bout hyur to hev sot the paraira afire, an thur 's been no lightnin to do it; thurfor, it must 'a been did eyther by a Injun, or thet ur dod-rotted spuntaynyus kumbuxshun.'

'One or t' other.'

'Wal, bein as this child don't b'lieve in the kumbuxshun nohow, thurfor it 's my opeenyun thet red Injuns did the bizness—*they* did sartint.'

'No doubt of it,' assented Garey.

'An ef they did,' continued the old trapper, 'thur about yit somewhur not fur off, an we 've got to keep a sharp look-out for our har—*we* hev.'

'Safe, we have,' assented Garey.

'I tell 'ee, Bill,' continued Rube in a new strain, 'the Injuns is mighty riled jest now. I never knowd 'em so savagerous an fighty. The war hez gin 'em a fresh start, an thur dander 's up agin us, by reezun thet the gin'ral didn't take thur offer to help us agin the yellur bellies. Ef we meet wi' eyther Kimanch or Leepan on these hyur plains, thu 'll scalp us, or we 'll scalp 'em—thet 'll be it. Wagh!'

'But what for could they 'a sot the parairy on fire?' inquired Garey.

'Thet ere,' replied Rube, 'thet ere wur what puzzled me at fust. I thort it mout 'a been done by accydent—preehaps by the scatterin o' a camp-fire—for Injuns is careless enuf 'bout thet. Now, hows'owever I 've got a diff'rent idee. Thet story thet Dutch an Frenchy hev fetched from the rancherie, gies me a insight inter the hull bizness.'

I knew the 'story' to which Rube had reference. Lige and Le Blanc, when at the village, had heard some rumour of an Indian foray that had just been made against one of the Mexican towns, not far from the rancheria. It had occurred on the same day that we marched out. The Indians—supposed to be Lipans or Comanches—had sacked the place, and carried off both plunder and captives. A party of them had passed near the rancheria after we ourselves had left it. This party had 'called' at the Hacienda de Vargas and completed the pillage, left unfinished by the guerilla. This was the substance of what the messengers had heard.

'You mean about the Injuns?' said Garey half interrogatively.

'In coorse,' rejoined Rube. 'Belike enuf, 'em Injuns ur the same niggurs we gin sich a rib-roastin to by the moun. Wagh! they hain't gone back to thur mountains, as 'twur b'lieved: they dassent 'a gone back in sich disgrace, 'ithout takin eyther har or hosses. The squaws ud 'a hooted 'em.'

'Sure enough.'

'Sure sartint. Wal, Billee, 'ee see now what I mean: thet party's been a skulketin 'bout hyur ever since, till they got a fust-rate chance at the Mexikin town, an thur they've *struck a blow.*'

'It's mighty like as you say, Rube; but why have they sot fire to the parairy?'

'Wagh! Bill, kin ye not see why: it ur plain as Pike's Peak on a summery day.'

'I don't see,' responded Garey in a thoughtful tone.

'Well, this child *do;* an this ur the reezun: as I tell 'ee, the Injuns hain't forgot the lambaystin they hed by the moun; an preehaps bein now a weak party, an thinkin thet we as wolloped 'em wur still i' the rancherie, they wur afeerd thet on hearin o' thur pilledgin, we mout be arter 'em.'

'An they've burnt the parairy to kiver thur trail?'

'Preezactly so.'

'By Gosh, you're right, Rube!—it's uncommon like. But whar do you think this trail's goin? Surely the hoss hain't been caught in the fire?'

I bent forward in the saddle, and listened with acute eagerness. To my great relief, the answer of the old trapper was in the negative.

'He hain't,' said he; 'ne'er a bit o' it. His trail, do 'ee see, runs in a bee-line, or clost on a bee-line: now, ef the fire hed 'a begun afore he wur acrosst this paraira, he wud long since 'a doubled 'bout, an tuk the back track; but 'ee see he hain't did so; thurfor, I conclude he's safe through it, an the grass must 'a been sot afire ahint 'im.'

I breathed freely after listening to these words. A load seemed lifted from my breast, for up to this moment I had been vainly endeavouring to combat the fearful apprehension that had shaped itself in my imagination. From the moment that we had entered the burned prairie, my eyes constantly, and almost mechanically, had sought the ground in front of our course, had wandered over it, with uneasy glance, in dread of beholding forms—lifeless—burned and charred——

The words of the trapper gave relief—almost an assurance that the steed and his rider were still safe—and, under inspiration of renewed hope, I rode more cheerfully forward.

CHAPTER LXXII.

'INJUN SIGN.'

After a pause, the guides resumed their conversation, and I continued to listen. I had a reason for not mingling in it. If I joined them in their counsels, they might not express their convictions so freely, and I was desirous of knowing what they truly thought. By keeping close behind them, I could hear all—myself unnoticed under the cloud of dust that rose around us. On the soft ashes, the hoof-stroke was scarcely audible, our horses gliding along in a sweeping silent walk.

'By Gosh! then,' said Garey, 'if Injuns fired the parairy, they must 'a done it to wind'ard, an we're travellin right in the teeth o' the wind; we're goin in a ugly direction, Rube; what do you think o' 't, old hoss?'

'Jest what you sez, boyee—a cussed ugly direckshun—durnation'd ugly.'

'It ain't many hours since the fire begun, an the redskins won't be far from t' other side, I reckon. If the hoss-trail leads us right on them, we'll be in a fix, old boy.'

'Ay,' replied Rube, in a low but significant drawl; 'ef it do, an ef this niggur don't a miskalkerlate, it *will* lead right on 'em, *plum straight custrut into thur camp.*'

I started on hearing this. I could no longer remain silent; but brushing rapidly forward to the side of the trapper, in hasty phrase demanded his meaning.

'Jest what 'ee've heern me say, young fellur,' was his reply.

'You think that there are Indians ahead—that the horse has gone to their camp?'

'No, not *gone* thur; nor kin I say for sartint thur ur Injuns yet; though it looks mighty like. Thur's nuthin else to guv reezun for the fire—nuthin as Bill or me kin think o'; an ef thur be Injuns, then I don't think the hoss hez *gone* to thur camp, but I do kalkerlate it's mighty like he's been *tuk* thur: thet's what I thinks, young fellur.'

'You mean that the Indians have captured him?'

'Thet's preezactly what this child means.'

'But how? What reason have you for thinking so?'

'Wal—jest because I think so.'

'Pray explain, Rube!' I said in an appealing tone. I feared that his secretive instincts would get the better of him, and he would delay giving his reasons from a pure love of mystification that was inherent in the old fellow's nature. I was too anxious to be patient; but my appeal proved successful.

'Wal, 'ee see, young fellur, the hoss must 'a crosst hyur jest afore this paraira wur sot afire; an it's mighty reezunible to s'pose thet whosomediver did the bizness, Injun or no Injun, must 'a been to win'ard o' hyur. It ur also likely enuf, I reckun, thet the party must 'a seed the hoss; an it ur likely agin thet nobody wa'nt a gwine to see *thet* hoss, wi' the gurl stropped down 'long his hump ribs, 'ithout bein kewrious enuf to take arter 'im. Injuns 'ud be safe to go arter 'im, yellin like blazes; an arter 'im they've gone, an roped 'im, I reckun—thet they've done.'

'You think they could have caught him?'

'Sartint. The hoss by then must 'a been dead beat—thet ur, unless he's got the divvel in 'im; an by Geehorum! I gin to surspect—— Gehu—Gehosophat! jest as I said: lookee, thur—thur!'

'What is it?' I inquired, seeing the speaker suddenly halt and point to the ground, upon which his eyes also were fixed. 'What is it, Rube? I can perceive nothing strange.'

'Don't 'ee see 'em hoss-tracks?—thur!—thick as sheep-feet—hundreds o' 'em!'

I certainly noticed some slight hollows in the surface, nearly levelled up by the black ashes. I should not have known them to be horse-tracks.

'They ur,' said Rube, 'every one o' 'em—an Injun hoss-tracks sure.'

'They may be the wild-hosses, Rube?' said one of the rangers, riding up and surveying the sign.

'Wild jackasses!' angrily retorted the old trapper. 'Whur did *you* ever see a wild hoss? Do 'ee s'pose I've turned stone-blind, do 'ee? Stan thur, my mar!' he cried, flinging his lean carcass out of the saddle, at the same time talking to his mare: ''ee knows better than thet fellur, I kin tell by the way yur sniftin. Keep yur ground a minnit, ole gurl, till ole Rube shew these hyur greenhorns how a mountain man kin read sign—wild hosses! wagh!'

After thus delivering himself, the trapper dropped upon his knees, placed his lips close to the ground, and commenced blowing at the black ashes. All had by this time ridden up, and sat in their saddles watching him.

We saw that he was clearing the ashes out of one of the hollows which he had pronounced to be horse-tracks, and which now proved to be so.

'Thur now, mister!' said he, turning triumphantly, and rather savagely, upon the ranger who had questioned the truth of his conjecture: 'thur's a *shod* track—shod wi' parflesh too. Did 'ee ever see a wild hoss, or a wild mule, or a wild jackass eyther, shod wi' parflesh? Ef 'ee did, it's more'n Rube Rawlins ever seed, an thet ur trapper's been on the hoss-plains well-nigh forty yeern. Wagh!'

Of course, there was no reply to this interrogatory. There was the track, and, dismounting, we all examined it in turn.

Sure enough, it was the track of a shod horse—shod with *parfleché*—thick leather made from the hide of the buffalo bull.

We all knew this to be a mode of shoeing practised by the horse-Indians of the plains, and only by them.

The evidence was conclusive: Indians had been upon the ground.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF TOBACCO.

Oh, thou *weed*
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst ne'er been born!
—SHAKSPEARE.

HAS the reader ever watched the rise and progress of a paper-war?—A quiet harmless-looking letter, with a modest Latin or Greek signature—Alpha, for instance—appears on Monday morning in the *Times*, let us say, pointing out an abuse, advocating a reform, or prosing in the usual respectable and patriotic way on one of the thousand-and-one topics that form the subjects of newspaper correspondence. The gauntlet is thus thrown down, the hat is tossed into the ring. By the act of writing a letter to the *Times*, Alpha emerges from his character as a private individual, and is bound to do battle *à l'outrance* against all comers in defence of his opinions. The challenge is accepted. On Tuesday, everything he has stated is flatly contradicted in a letter signed Beta, in which the writer broadly insinuates that he considers Alpha either a knave or a fool, or possibly a union of both. On Wednesday, Gamma starts up in defence of Alpha, and abuses Beta like a pickpocket. On Thursday, Delta takes up the cudgels for Beta, and makes mince-meat of Alpha and Gamma. In the meantime, a shower of replies, rejoinders, and such-like controversial fireworks have been let off by the other three; and by the end of the week, the whole alphabet, from Alpha to Omega, are hard at work, hammer and tongs, to the serious damage of their own tempers, and the intense delight and edification of the public. These intellectual gladiators are exactly like the vultures described by Longfellow:

Never stoops the soaring vulture
On his quarry in the desert,
On the sick or wounded bison,
But another vulture, watching
From his high aërial look-out,
Sees the downward plunge, and follows;
And a third pursues the second,
Coming from the invisible ether,
First a speck, and then a vulture,
Till the air is dark with pinions.

In the same way it may be said:

Never writes the 'Constant Reader'
To that much-enduring martyr
Called 'The Editor' of a paper,
But another 'Reader,' sitting
In his comfortable club-house,
Sees the feeble scrawl, and answers;
And a third attacks the second,
Each epistle getting longer—
First a line, and then a column,
Till the paper's full of letters.

One of these pen-and-ink combats has been lately raging with much bitterness between the smoking and non-smoking members of the community, during which passage of pens, the subject of tobacco, to use a modern expression, has been thoroughly 'ventilated.' The *Lancet* has been the principal medium through which the tobacco-stoppers have fulminated their anathemas against the fragrant plant; while its devotees—and their name is legion—have, in their own opinion, triumphantly confuted the arguments of its detractors in a cloud of letters, pamphlets, 'pleas for the pipe,' and other well-fumigated productions. I have before me a whole heap of these paper-pellets, one half demonstrating beyond a question that tobacco is a poison and a bane, and the other half proving as positively that it is a balm and a blessing.

Without attempting to decide this important question, and believing that the golden rule, *medio tutissimus ibis*, applies to smoking as well as every other gratification, I shall attempt to compress into the limits of a page or two a few of the facts concerning the history, cultivation, and manufacture of tobacco, which have been elicited in the course of the controversy.

One of the best volumes on the subject has been written by Mr Steinmetz, a barrister, who acknowledges himself to be an inveterate smoker, and who had a cigar in his mouth continually during the composition of his work, which extends to 174 pages. The learned gentleman starts with the dictum, that the natives of every country on the globe have had from time immemorial their own peculiar narcotic, either home-made or imported. Thus, in North America, they have tobacco; in South America, the thorn-apple, coca, tobacco, and hemp; in Europe, hops and tobacco; in Africa, hemp; and in Asia, amanita, betel-nut, and tobacco. Professor Johnson, the author of the *Chemistry of Common Life*, in illustration of the same idea, published a 'map shewing the distribution of narcotics over the globe.' The tobacco-plant, in its numerous varieties, is found from the equator to the 60th degree of latitude, but the savages of America enjoy the credit of having originally discovered its narcotic properties.—Sir Walter Raleigh, as everybody knows, gets the credit of having been the first to introduce it in England.*

It is related of him, that having retired to his room to have a comfortable weed in private, he soon became completely buried in smoke and contemplation. Finding this employment but dry work, and totally forgetting that his occupation was as yet a secret, he presently called out to his servant for a cup of malt liquor. On entering the room, the man, instead of giving his master the beer, dashed it violently into his face, and rushed down stairs to alarm the family with the dreadful news that Sir Walter's head was on fire, and the smoke pouring out of his mouth and nostrils.

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* Raleigh may be regarded as *connected* with the introduction of tobacco into England, but not truly its introducer. The real history of the affair seems to have been briefly this. In the colonising expedition sent out by Raleigh to Virginia in 1584, was Hariot, the inventor of the system of notation in modern algebra. While exploring the country, he observed the culture of tobacco among the natives, who used it for 'crudities of the stomach.' Fully believing in the supposed virtues of the herb, he accustomed himself to its use. Hariot is thus to be regarded as certainly the first European who smoked tobacco. The colony lost heart under its difficulties, and when Sir Francis Drake came their way in 1586, on his return from a successful cruise against the Spanish settlements, Ralph Lane, the governor, asked and obtained a passage home for himself and the other colonists. With him came two or three of the natives, and a sample of *Tobacco*. The precipitate desertion of the colony by Lane was most unfortunate. Had he waited a few days longer, he would have received new colonists with ample supplies, which Raleigh had sent out. He therefore underwent heavy reproach, and sunk out of notice, though heretofore a man of some distinction. There can be no doubt that King James alludes to him in the following passage of the *Counterblast*: 'It is not so long,' says he, 'since the first entry of this abuse amongst us here, as this age can well remember, both the first author and the form of the first introduction of it amongst us. It was neither brought in by king, great conqueror, nor learned doctor of physic. With the report of a great discovery for a conquest, some two or three savage men were brought in, together with a savage custom. But the pity is, the poor barbarous men died; but that that vile barbarous custom is yet alive, yea, in fresh vigour: so it seems a miracle to me how a custom springing from so vile a ground, *and brought in by a father so generally hated*, should be welcomed upon so slender a warrant.'—ED. *C. J.*

Since its introduction into civilised society, tobacco has had to encounter many enemies, among kings, popes, and populace; and, judging from the late attacks in the *Lancet*, its persecution has not by any means ceased in the present day. James I., the British Solomon, as he was called, in his celebrated *Counterblast*, written in 1616, characterises the practice of smoking as 'a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoake of the pit that is bottomlesse.' The expense of smoking in those days may be imagined from the fact mentioned by Aubrey, that tobacco 'was sold then for its wayte in silver.' 'I have heard,' he says, 'some of our old yeomen neighbours say that when they went to Malmesbury or Chippenham, they culled their biggest shillings to lay in the scales against the tobacco.' The royal reformer also states in his *Misocapnus* that 'some of the gentry bestow three, and some four hundred pounds a yeere upon this precious stinke.'

In its pulverised form, the unfortunate plant has been thundered against from the Vatican. In 1624, Pope Urban VIII. published a decree of excommunication against all who took snuff in church. Ten years afterwards, Russians convicted of smoking tobacco had their noses cut off. In Transylvania, the penalty for growing it was total confiscation of property; and for smoking it, a fine not exceeding 200 florins. In 1719, the senate of Strasbourg prohibited the cultivation of tobacco, for fear it should diminish the growth of corn; and Amurath, fourth king of Persia, made smoking a capital offence. They managed these things better in France: instead of cutting off people's heads and noses, the government put its hand into their pockets. A heavy duty was imposed on tobacco, and its cultivation converted into a monopoly. The consequence of this manœuvre is, that last year our friends across the Channel paid into the coffers of the state, for the enjoyment of their narcotic, somewhere about L.5,000,000 sterling. We are mulcted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to much the same amount. In the United Kingdom, in 1853, the consumption of tobacco was nearly 30,000,000 pounds, and the duty paid L.4,751,760. In Hamburg, 40,000 cigars are consumed daily, the number of adult males in the population not amounting to 45,000. The average consumption for the whole human race—about 1,000,000,000—is said to be 70 ounces a head; the total quantity smoked being 2,000,000 tons, or 4,480,000,000 pounds!

America is the great tobacco-garden of the world, although great quantities are grown both in India and Europe. The choicest specimens are found in the island of Cuba, which is said to be the jewel of the Spanish crown—the fragrant Havana cigar being absolutely necessary to propel the blue blood of her gentility. Manilla tobacco is produced in the Philippine Islands, and Latakia in Syria. Tobacco was once extensively grown in Ireland and Yorkshire; and it is the opinion of Mr Steinmetz, that if it were not forbidden by law, its cultivation in this country would, with the aid of science in the matter of manure, prove a good speculation.

In America, the seed is sown in a hotbed about the beginning of March. In May, the transplanting begins, each plant being allowed the space of three square feet to expand in. Tobacco, in its early stages, has many enemies, in the shape of frost, insects, and caterpillars; and instances have occurred in which three successive transplantings in one year have been ruined by one or other of these causes. After the third failure, the French usually despair, and plant hemp to lessen their loss; but the tobacco-grower has the consolation of knowing, that one successful season out of three pays. In September, the crop is gathered, and the leaves are hung up in covered sheds for six or seven weeks till perfectly dry and withered. In this state, tobacco is almost without smell, its peculiar aroma being produced by fermentation, for which purpose it is collected in heaps on the floor, and carefully covered with blankets for thirty-six hours or more, according to the state of the atmosphere. It is then pressed into hogsheads with a powerful lever, which pressure has the effect of distributing the oil uniformly throughout the mass; and in this state it makes its appearance in the London Docks.

Here it remains in bond till the duty is paid, when any part that is found to be damaged is cut off, and burnt in a huge kiln, called the Queen's Pipe. For its distribution, there are, in the first place, in London twelve wholesale tobacco-merchants, or brokers, to whom it is consigned; ninety manufacturers, who convert it into cigars, snuff, and the various sorts of tobacco for the pipe; and more than 1500 tobacconists, or general dealers. There are, besides, eighty-two clay-pipe makers. Mr Steinmetz calculates that 7380 individuals in the metropolis are employed in preparing tobacco for the mouths and olfactories of its population. The cigar-makers are paid at the rate of so much per hundred; and a good workman can easily earn L.2, 10s. a week. In Hamburg, the manufacture is the most important branch of its trade; and 150,000,000 cigars are turned out every year. It gives employment to 10,000 persons; and a printing-press, with a numerous staff, is exclusively occupied in printing the necessary labels for boxes and packets.

Having traced the plant from the hotbed to the dock, let us follow it now to its eventual destination—the mouth of the smoker.

We will begin with cigars. On the tobacco being turned out of the hogshead, it is first damped, to make it pliable, and then sorted. The least likely-looking leaves are called *fillers*, and form the main body of the cigar; the second best go by the name of *bunch-wrappers*, and constitute rough envelopes for the fillers; and the finest, or *outsides*, are intended to catch the eye of the customer. The actual manufacture occupies but a few seconds.

After having been sorted, the leaves are deprived of their stalks by the *stripper*, and handed by him to the maker. That functionary picks out a bunch-wrapper, and cuts it into a form something like the stripe of a balloon; in this he rolls a quantity of filler, thus producing a rather disreputable-looking cigar; it is then cut to the required length; and, finally, he gives it an attractive appearance, by wrapping it neatly up in an unblemished outside, and fastening the tip-end with paste coloured with chicory, to keep everything in its place. A drying-stove completes the operation.

Most of the tobacco for the pipe is cut into shreds by machinery. *Shag* derives its name from its rough and bushy appearance; *bird's-eye* is so called because small portions of stalk are mixed with it, which bear a fancied resemblance to the eyes of birds; *oronoko* is a namesake of the American river; *canaster* was originally the name given in America to the baskets of rushes in which the tobacco was packed for exportation; and *pigtail* owes its appellation to its supposed likeness to the caudal appendage of the unclean animal. Its other varieties are like the advantages in an auctioneer's advertisement, 'too numerous to mention.'

In the manufacture of snuff, the stalks of tobacco are used as well as the leaves. The *Scotch* article is composed almost entirely of the former, while the latter predominates in *rappee* and the darker varieties. *Prince's-mixture*, and the whole of the 'fancy snuffs,' are scented to suit the taste of the customer. All great inventions are the result of accident. Newton discovered the law of gravitation by an apple tumbling on his head; the delicious flavour of roast pork was first made known to the world by a peasant whose pigsty had been burned down; and the peculiar and scorched odour of the celebrated *lundyfoot* snuff is said to be owing to the negligence of an individual who, like King Alfred, forgot to 'turn' the batch that had been intrusted to his care. Good sometimes springs from evil: the man got drunk, and made his master's fortune.

Before the tobacco is ground into snuff, it undergoes a process of *curing*—like bacon—which consists in its being moistened with salted water and other preparations. This mixture is called *sauce*, and each manufacturer has his own peculiar condiment, upon which the flavour of his snuff materially depends. After having been sprinkled with sauce, the material is heaped into a bin, where much of the essential oil of the tobacco is got rid of by heat and fermentation. It is then turned out and suffered to cool, when it is sent to the mills to be ground under heavy stones. Foreigners improve on this custom by cutting it into grain with machinery, or rasping it with a circular file, thereby avoiding the excessive friction which deteriorates English snuff, and interferes with its flavour.

Madame Pfeiffer relates that in Northern Sweden snuff is put into the mouth. In Iceland, it is applied to its legitimate receptacle, but in an extraordinary manner: 'Most of the peasants, and even many of the priests, have no proper snuff-box, but only a box made of bone, and shaped like a powder-flask. When they take snuff, they throw back the head, insert the point of the flask in the nose, and shake a dose of snuff into it! They then, with the greatest amiability, offer it to their neighbour; he to his; and so it goes round till it reaches its owner again.'

The practice of taking snuff is said to have been introduced into this country from France after the Restoration; but the custom did not originate with tobacco, as snuff is known to have been previously manufactured with herbs. In the matter of adulteration, the smoker has a decided advantage over the snuffer, as, out of forty samples of cut-tobacco examined by Dr Hassall, not one was found to be mixed with any foreign leaf or deleterious compound; whereas, in many of the nose-titillating 'mixtures' submitted to his inspection, he found a number of oxides, chromates, and bichromates that had no business there, including iron, red lead, amber, potash, and a substance that looked like powdered glass! The only adulteration of tobacco for smoking consisted in salt, water, and sugar—the two first being actually necessary in its manufacture, and the last being beneficial to the human frame, as smoking tends to diminish the saccharine constituents in the blood. The ingenious compositions vended at races and fairs by itinerant tobacconists (?), who offer misguided youths 'a cigar and a light for a penny,' are of course made up of hay and coloured paper. As a general rule, however, tobacco, next to eggs, is one of the least adulterated articles of consumption we can boast of in these terribly fast-going days.

More than half of the learned counsel's work is devoted to the 'Influence of Tobacco on the Human System,' a subject on which I have neither space nor inclination to enter. There are one or two points, however, in his argument which I shall briefly notice. Mr Steinmetz, with laudable impartiality, exhibits a chemical analysis by Professor Johnson, that appears calculated to put an immediate end to smoking. It seems that when the leaves of tobacco are mixed with water, and submitted to distillation, a volatile oil is produced, which, when applied to the nose, occasions sneezing, and when taken internally, gives rise to giddiness, nausea, and an inclination to vomit. When tobacco-leaves are infused in water made slightly sour by sulphuric acid, and the infusion is subsequently distilled with quicklime, a volatile, oily, colourless liquid, named nicotin, is produced, a single drop of which is sufficient to kill a dog. But besides these two volatile substances which exist ready formed in the tobacco-leaf, another substance, also of an oily nature, is produced when tobacco is distilled, alone, in a retort, or burned, as we do it, in a pipe. One drop of this applied to the tongue of a cat brought on convulsions, and in two minutes occasioned death. Of the truth of this analysis, which extends to a couple of pages, there can be no manner of doubt. Mr Steinmetz admits it himself, and acknowledges the correctness of the theory that may be founded upon it—namely, that if tobacco contains such poisonous elements, smoking must necessarily be injurious; but he asserts that, like many other theories, it breaks down utterly when applied to practice; in proof of which, he consoles his smoking readers by assuring them that he finished two cigars while transcribing the analysis.

Apropos of theories, this tobacco-loving barrister, while endeavouring to explain, with a profusion of jaw-breaking anatomical terms, the *modus operandi* of smoking, takes the opportunity, under cover of a cloud of such words as pneumogastric, *medulla oblongata*, *stylo-pharyngeus*, and the like, to start a theory of his own, from which, on national as well as personal grounds, I dissent *in toto*. Mr Steinmetz, who no doubt is possessed of an enormous proboscis, has the audacity to say:

'The larger the surface of the mucous membrane of the nose, the greater the activity of the intellect, or the anterior lobe of the brain; and without a well-developed nasal organ, there *never* was a well-developed intellect. The nose of genius in every age has been conspicuous, in every sphere of its numerous manifestations.'

This may be a very pleasant doctrine for men who, like Mr Steinmetz, have noses as large as pump-handles; but enjoying, as I do individually, a small but extremely useful olfactory organ, I beg to come forward on my own behalf, and that of the ordinary-nosed portion of the community in general, and offer an indignant protest against so monstrous a proposition.

I have not said anything in the course of this paper on the subject of *chewing;* but as this extremely unpleasant custom cannot with propriety be excluded from an article on the subject of tobacco, I shall conclude with an anecdote shewing that the habit, dirty though it be, is not unattended with advantages. Commodore Wilkes, of the Exploring Expedition, learned, in the course of a conversation with an intelligent savage of the Feejee Islands, that, on one occasion, a vessel, the hull of which was still visible on the beach, had come ashore in a storm, and that all the crew had fallen into the hands of the islanders.

'And what did you do with them?' asked Wilkes anxiously.

'Killed 'em all,' answered the savage.

'What did you do with them after you had killed them?'

'Eat 'em — good,' returned the anthropophagos, grinning at the remembrance of the horrible feast.

'Did you eat them all?' asked the commodore, feeling exceedingly unwell.

'Yes, we eat all but one.'

'And why didn't you eat him?' inquired the explorer, whose curiosity got the better of his horror.

'Cos he taste too much like tobacco. Couldn't eat him no how!'

There is no doubt that the individual who proved such a posthumous puzzle to the Feejee *gourmands*, owed his exemption from the fate of his comrades entirely to his partiality for pigtail. Enjoyers of the 'quid,' therefore, have the satisfaction of knowing that the juices of their favourite weed so completely saturate the tissues of their bodies, that, in case of shipwreck, they need be under no apprehension of ever being served up at a New-Zealand dinner-party.

IMPORTANT EMIGRATION ENTERPRISE.

We see by the *European*, New York paper, that at Albany they are organising a new association, called the *American Emigrant Aid and Homestead Company*, the objects of which are worthy of being made widely public. Hitherto, emigrants for the most part have betaken themselves to the wilderness, family by family, to spend their lives there, cut off from the comforts and conveniences of civilised life, and to die before they are overtaken by the humanising influences of society. It is the object of the company to reorganise emigration entirely: to tempt *bands* of adventurers, composed, if possible, of acquaintances and neighbours, to make the enterprise together, and thus bring society and its amenities with them into the wild, and provide themselves with a ready-made market for the produce of their industry. Such communities are to be composed of persons representing the social and industrial interests the colonists have been accustomed to at home: the clergyman, the schoolmaster, the artificer, the labourers of every kind—all are to be assembled for the general good; and thus the mere fact of their settling in a village will convert the before almost worthless land of the colonists into valuable property. The part the company are to play in this project is to furnish the capital; to purchase land cheaply, because in large quantities, and with cash; to erect the grist-mill, the saw-mill, &c., and generally make all necessary or attractive improvements; then sell allotments to the colonists, reserving, like the government, a section here and there for themselves. We lately printed a little article called *Emigration made Easy* (alluding to the through-ticket system of the great Canada Railway), but the scheme to which we now bespeak our readers' attention is *Emigration made pleasant and profitable*—emigration by which the adventurer forfeits none of his usual moral and intellectual privileges, and finds himself the master of profitable land by the mere fact of taking possession. All this, however, let it be said, is something in the future. These sanguine dreams can be realised only by talent, energy, and unflinching integrity on the part of the company.

PHILANTHROPY IN WINE.

The vine-disease has injured so much the production of wine in Portugal, that last year's vintage, as we learn from Ridley & Co.'s monthly circular, was virtually lost for commercial purposes, only 4000 pipes having been made. This state of things has given rise to a curious project, half-philanthropy, half-business speculation. Baron de Forrester has offered to take the vineyards of a parish in the Douro under his protection, on terms so favourable to the vine-farmers, that at first sight one is apt to regard him as a Quixotic enthusiast in good works. He offers to be at the trouble and expense of applying certain remedies to the plants, without demanding any return for his capital and labour, unless the vintage should be more than double that of last year; and even then, to be satisfied with one-half of the grapes gathered above that double quantity, and to be at the cost of gathering them himself. Should the proprietor prefer paying the expenses himself, the baron undertakes to furnish him with the remedy at cost-price, and to manage personally the operations, for one-tenth part of the wine made in excess of double last year's produce. He likewise claims the preference in the purchase of whatever wine the proprietor may have to dispose of at the market-price. Notwithstanding all this liberality, it is said that the native farmers have no faith in the efficacy of sulphur, which is probably the chief part of the proposed remedies; while the English intend applying the antidote with the greatest vigour. Messrs Ridley & Co. are of opinion that if Baron de Forrester's overtures are listened to by the parish he has addressed, it will be the means of conferring extensive *mutual* benefits.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

O that my death-day were as nigh
As is my marriage-morn!
I marvel such a thing as I
Should ever have been born,
To *sell* my youth, my hope, my truth;
To be—what most I scorn.

It seems such long, long years agone
I had a little sister;
They laid her in her coffin lone,
And I stood there and kissed her;
But till this hour with its stern power
I felt not how I missed her.

She might, with cool and gentle hand,
Have quenched this life-long fever—
This aching brow have softly fanned,
And, though my sins might grieve her,
What would not she have borne for me
Who is so still for ever!

O sister!—dead so long ago,
Thou of the spirit calm—
Wave! wave! above my burning brow,
But once thy shining palm,
And gently pour, my spirit o'er,
One drop of Heaven's own balm.

Sweet seraph! when we meet at last—
Thou, with thy radiant brow;
Mine, seared with records of the past,
And that forsaken vow—
This withered heart in shame would start
From aught as pure as thou.

Oh! the true hearts I might have filled,
Even to their inmost fold;
The loving spirits I have chilled
With haughty words and cold;
And now for wealth I sell myself,
A little glittering gold.

And more! O! more torment me not
With those reproachful eyes,
Shewing what might have been my lot—
Stars of the past, they rise—
Enough of care have I to bear,
Without such memories.

Alas! I feel 'tis vanity
To rail against my fate,
For God hath given high gifts to me,
To make me good and great;
But I have sold the peace of old
For a little worldly state.

No more!—from all these idle words
But little help I borrow;
Proud thoughts have fled like summer birds,
And left me to my sorrow,
And this grief-stained brow; but folly now
Would be a sin to-morrow.

M. L. P.

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COMMON SENSE.

'THE Popkinses have a good deal of talent about them, but they have no common sense,' is the verdict universally passed upon our family; and it is a just one: everybody says so; and what everybody says—it stands to common sense—must be true. The virtue expired with a certain clerical ancestor of ours, a sort of vicar of Bray, who under the Houses of Cromwell, Stuart, and Hanover, was never out of favour with the reigning powers, and who at last, like a jolly fat canon as he was, went off peaceably in his stall. He could 'seek the Lord' with armour on, perform the lighted candle and genuflection business, or vex the soul of the *habitans in sicco* of the period with Protestant oratory, all equally well. He was a man of the strongest common sense, and died worth L.30,000; and 'Where would you be without him?' is a remark I have frequently made to members of my family, when they have been inclined to question his principles. It is quite certain that none of his descendants would have ever made that money: his second son was put in a madhouse, and ended there, because he was always experimentalising with fire and water, and persisted in asserting that carriages could be moved without horses; another member of his race proposed to keep off small-pox by means of the intervention of a cow; and a third spent a good deal of his time in building a room to sit in under water. There was a good deal of a certain sort of talent in all these persons; but what is so much to be regretted is, that what they did was contrary to common sense: the world never forgave them for it to their dying day. My father, who might have stepped into a family living of L.800 a year as soon as he left college, chose instead to join a marching regiment, and live in that, upon L.90 per annum besides his pay, because he had religious scruples. Now, in the first place, all scruples are foolish; and religious scruples are worse than foolish—they're wicked; and in the next place, the living actually went out of the family! What harm would my governor have done to it? He was not an infidel—he was not a Radical—he was not a grossly immoral person; he would have hunted, I suppose, and shot, and fished—occupations which he delighted in, very naturally, more than in anything else in the world—and as for visiting the poor people, which, it seems, he considered himself unfitted for, why, he might have got a curate to do all that, paying him very handsomely, and still receiving L.740 out of the living. He could have bought most excellent sermons—and it stands to common sense that these must be much better than what one makes for himself; he could—— But in fine, he lost everything and did nothing, all through having scruples, or, which is the same thing, from the want of a little common sense. With all my regard for the governor, it positively makes me mad to think of what he threw away; not only the actual advantages, but the chances. Why, with our connection—I've got two first-cousins in the House of Peers, and our arms are the same as the Premier's—he might have been made a bishop, or even an archbishop—who knows?—the spiritual shepherd of the Church of England, with six-and-twenty thousand pounds a year! But then, he never could have said '*Nolo Episcopari*,' for he had not the common sense for it.

Then my mother, she was my father's cousin, and a regular Popkins. At twenty-one years of age, and one of six, she refused Sir Tattenham Leger, a man who owned half a county, and was indirectly connected with the royal family. Are you and I, my Public, going to believe that any reasons, any possible circumstances, could have justified such conduct as that? I put aside the direct injustice done to myself; but was it the right thing for any woman to do, who contemplated the possibility of ever having children? What had she to urge against the man? His age? His somewhat convivial language? The absurd story of his having broken the hearts of his two former wives? The haughtiness which rather became a person of his rank and influence than otherwise? Nothing of the sort. 'I love dear cousin Henry, and he loves me;' that was her sole objection; and my uncle—Percival Popkins—positively let her have her way. Now, only mark the consequences: the baronet was seventy-five, and died the very next winter. Why, in the name of common sense, didn't she marry him first, and my father afterwards? She would then have had a title, a park, and a town-house. As it was, my beloved parents lived in barracks, and in barracks was the writer of this paper born. I positively believe that sometimes in the course of their wandering, and while my father was a subaltern, a curtain drawn across the apartment formed the sole partition between their sitting-room and bedroom. Now, is there a human being endowed with common sense who believes that love, or indeed any other mere sentiment whatever, could have compensated for such a position as that?

When my grandfather died—who had changed his name for that of Walker, and who was, I am thankful to say, the director of a joint-stock bank—we came into a property, and my father sold his commission. And how did Captain Popkins do that? By giving out that he was quite undecided about leaving the regiment, but was ready to go if the juniors made it worth his while? By getting an extra three hundred or so out of the first purchasing lieutenant, two hundred out of the next, and so on, with nice little pickings from the first purchasing ensign, in the usual way? Quite the reverse! he sold his captain's commission—if you can believe such madness—for regulation-price! Why? Oh, don't ask *me*, or I shall lose my temper: the high-flown considerations upon which my father acts, are, I am happy to say, quite out of *my* range of vision. I am no genius, thank goodness, but I do think I have a little common sense; I think I know the world; I believe I know the value of money. The idea of a man sinking L.30,000, as my father did, in the funds and an estate in Westmoreland!

'Why, sir,' said I in remonstrance—for I know, I hope, how to be respectful to a parent, whatever may be his follies—'in these railway-days, you might double, or at least make ever so much more out of that money.'

'I don't want any more, Bob,' answered my father.

Now, think of a person, sane, or at least not in confinement, openly avowing that he did not want any more money!

'Sir,' replied I, with a little of that tact which—perhaps partial—friends have generally allowed me to possess, 'I was thinking of your responsibilities. Consider how much more good you might do with double your income!'

Sometimes—I never can quite account for it—when I am talking to the governor, there comes over his face just such an expression as a very clever fellow might wear when a second-rate man is trying to do him, and he wore it just then very decidedly.

'Do you think that likely, Bob?' said he slily. 'How much do you spend a year in the practice of benevolence?'

'Sir,' replied I—and I felt somehow hot all over—'I hold the indiscriminate charity'——

'Stop, Bob,' said the governor interrupting; 'we won't enter into that subject. If I were to double your allowance, do you think you would spend twice as much in doing good? You seem to have a doubt about that; so have I. If the reason you urge in favour of speculation be valid—though most speculators, I am afraid, Bob, are far from having such noble aims as you—ought not the recipients of our present bounty to be consulted before we risk their interests? For, if we fail, they fail; and when we succeed, Bob, we may sometimes forget to pay them their full dividends. You know we read that it's very hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

'Well, father,' said I, 'I am sorry I spoke to you.'

Nothing gives me such a tremor—for my disposition is naturally reverential—as to hear the Scriptures referred to in the affairs of this world. I always attend my parish church, I hope, every Sunday, wet or fine, and listen to all the clergyman has to say; but it's not a layman's place, that's my opinion, to go preaching and teaching to people out of the Bible upon week-days. It has the very worst effects upon the lower classes, I'm confident; for I knew a tinker once who held the abominable doctrine, that one man was as good as another, and who had the blasphemy to tell me that he learned that for himself out of the New Testament. Of course there are expressions in it, here and there, about rich men and so on, but it stands to common sense that one isn't to take them literally. The idea, for instance, of it being my duty to give a half-naked fellow on the road one of the great-coats I'm sitting upon, is simply preposterous. What becomes of the rights of property? What becomes of political economy? What becomes, I should like to know, of common sense itself? Why don't my governor—if it comes to that—give all he's got to the poor? Why don't he cast his last shilling into the treasury, like the poor widow in the parable—which was a pretty example of political economy, by the by—and let us all come upon the parish at once? That would be being consistent, that would; and consistency I hold to be the very next best thing to common sense.

I hope I am a better Christian than to call my brother John a fool; but I can't help having my own opinion about him for all that. He and his wife are absolutely living—no, existing—upon L.250 per annum in a cottage close to my father's house. I think I know my duty to society, to the circle in which I move, better than to propose to any woman unless I have a thousand a year to offer her, at the very least. I feel my responsibilities, I trust, sufficiently strongly not to dream of asking her to live in the country unless I could keep her a carriage and pair. Even on the excellent salary I am now receiving at the Bank, I calculate that I shall not be in a condition to fall in love until I am fifty, but shall then fall in love immediately with some person of property and connection; by that time, John will have had six children, and have sunk in the social scale two degrees at least. It is of no use for him to say that he does not care a fourpenny-piece for the social scale, because that isn't common sense. A man may say that he likes beer better than wine (John does); but I am not going to believe him any the more for that: that's what I tell my brother John—for it's hard if one can't say what one likes to a younger brother with L.250 a year, and a family too—whenever he tries to humbug one.

'Liberty and the beauties of nature,' said he upon one occasion, 'make up to me for the absence of all luxuries which I could procure only at their expense. You don't appreciate my pleasures—pleasures is a faint word for them—any more than I appreciate yours, Bob.'

I knew what he meant by all this; he meant lakes and sunsets, and mountains, and birds, and books—in a word, what is called poetry. Now, I have read *Lalla Rookh* myself—for I have always made it a point to be well informed—and I own that that sort of thing is pretty enough; but the idea of poetry having anything to do with real life!—that's where John shews his utter disregard of common sense. 'Now, poets'—this is what I told him—'never possess any: your geniuses are for ever in jail, John; every sense but common sense, that's what all you fellows have.'

'We have common sense, too,' replied he, as cool as a cucumber; 'and if we could derive a satisfaction from the results of a clever stroke of business, made piquant perhaps by the least tinge of dishonesty, not only equal to that experienced by—no offence—yourself, Bob, but with a considerable margin of pleasure in addition as recompense for what would be to us uncongenial and prosaic, not to say dirty, work, you would, I think, find us rivals quite the reverse of despicable both at change and market. You know how the Greek trades-people suffered, notwithstanding their well-established adulterations, when the philosopher of old set up *his* shop, to prove that he could be a man of business.'

'Oh, confound it,' said I, for I am none of your arguefiers, 'if metaphysics is your game, I'm off; only just answer me this: was there ever a poet yet who kept his own accounts, and left off in the world a better man—I mean, of course, a richer—than he began?'

'The majority of them,' answered he, lighting a pipe, 'have most certainly done so; a number of them, you will allow it, have even shewn a common sense above the common, in living all their lives at other people's expense; many of them have been remarkable for their business habits—William Wordsworth, for instance, and Robert Southey, who both lived within ten miles of this cottage-door, while Mr Samuel Rogers was a banker: think of that, Bob! Shakspeare, I believe, had much more common sense than Baron Rothschild.'

'Come, John,' cried I, with a burst of laughter, 'perhaps, after *that*, you'll have the kindness to tell me what common sense is?' And this was his reply.

'Common sense, Bob, is the sense, as its name implies, which is common to everybody, and its office in us, according to general opinion, is to watch over and provide for our own interests and happiness. Men of striking intellect, of all sorts, possess, I believe, this quality in greater proportion than ordinary people; these latter, however, being by far the most numerous, agreeing among themselves upon what are the objects to be desired in life, and perceiving the others to be striving after and delighting in quite different things, are inclined to deny them common sense; thereby making themselves judges of the interests and happiness of natures confessedly higher. Moreover, the vulgar, having thus flattered themselves that this quality is peculiarly their own, and possessing for the most part little other sense beside, are wont to exalt common sense to a most ridiculous degree.'

'Oh,' said I, 'since you choose to get rude and personal'—which is a thing I particularly object to in all argument—'I shall certainly not prolong the conversation.'

NATIONALITY.

What is nationality? Is there a distinct nationality for Scotland, England, Ireland? Are the inhabitants of England and Scotland—of Lowland Scotland at least—one and the same race, with hardly any appreciable difference, or are they two perfectly distinct peoples? It may not be uninteresting at the present time, when this subject is so much discussed—meeting us in every newspaper, and forming so frequent a topic of conversation—to take a calm review of the matter; to see what ethnology, that clearer up of the history of nations, has to say about the business. A slight sketch of the history of the population of the two countries, if it does not enable us to settle the question to our satisfaction, may help us to a better understanding of it—may keep us from a good deal of error, and may prevent us talking a considerable quantity of nonsense.

To begin, then, with the beginning: Who were the people who first colonised the islands of Great Britain and Ireland? The answer to this question does not admit of much dispute: it was the Celtic race—the first of the Indo-European family in Europe. If there was a Præ-Celtic people in Britain—an extension of the Finnic or Allophyllian race—which is doubtful, it does not affect the present inquiry. It is sufficient for our purpose to commence with the Celts as the earliest inhabitants of Britain. Without going further back for the origin and seat of this race than the shores nearest to our own, it is enough to say that Britain received its earliest population from France and Belgium; that at two distinct periods it received colonies from the two great branches of this family—the southern or Gaelic branch from France; the northern or Cymraeg branch from Belgium. The Gaulic or Gaelic branch appears to have been the earliest colonists, and probably spread over the whole of South Britain; but pressed upon by the next migration—that of the Cymri, they were eventually driven north and west. One portion, driven beyond the rivers Clyde and Forth, took refuge in the extreme northern part of the island, which received the name of Albyn; the other took their way through Wales, from whence they passed over into Ireland. The Cimbri, Cymri, or Cymraeg, then spread themselves over the greater part of Britain. They were the ancient Britons, whose descendants, the Cambrians, or Welsh, still exist in Wales, Cornwall, and more mixed in Cumberland. They probably also spread over the greater part of Scotland, encroaching upon the ancient kingdom of Albyn, and pressing upon the Gaels, drove them into the extreme Western Highlands. The Cymri in Scotland were identical with the ancient Caledonians or Picts. The northern portion of our island may, however, have been colonised by a direct migration of the same race, coming into it by sea from nearly the same quarter—Jutland—and not indirectly by the way of England. There are, however, some historians who maintain, chiefly on the authority of a passage in Tacitus, that the Caledonii or Picti were not Celts at all, but Germans, or rather Scandinavians. In this we cannot concur. The Picts or Caledonians were Celts of the Cymric branch, and closely allied to the Welsh or ancient Britons. The proofs of this rest upon the affinities of their languages, to be seen in the names of particular localities within the Pictish and Cambrian areas, which they still bear.

So far, then, the original population of England and Scotland rests upon nearly the same substratum—that of the Cymri or ancient Britons. That of Ireland is somewhat different, having a Gaulic rather than a Cimbric origin. The Gael is better known in Ireland under the name of Erse.

After this first colonisation by the Cymri, there was the Belgian immigration, which was chiefly confined to the southern shores of South Britain. These drove the Cymri further north into the interior. They were the men who opposed Cæsar on his expedition into Britain. The Belgæ, however, although more civilised, from having left their centre at a later period, were of the same family with the Cymri who had preceded them, both being of the same northern branch of the Celtic family.

We have next the Roman Conquest, introducing, during an occupation of four hundred years, all manner of heterogeneous elements: besides the pure Italians, there were in the legions Germans, Sarmatians, Moors from Africa, and much more besides. Long as was the Roman occupation, it produced but a partial change in the blood of the population. The Romans, to do them justice, were conquerors, not exterminators, like some of the races that came after them. Partial as it was, it was confined chiefly to South Britain. Their departure left two distinct populations in Britain—the original and pure Celtic population, and the Romanised Celts; the latter in the large towns and their immediate neighbourhood, the former constituting the rural population: the first demarcation between town and country thus early established, and felt even to the present day—good old country families *versus* upstart town-folks.

Passing over for the present the invasions of South Britain by the Scots and Picts, which were merely temporary raids, not altering the population, we come next to the Saxon or Teutonic invasion—differing, however, in its own ethnological character, and far from being one and indivisible. It consisted of two broad and well-marked divisions: the Saxons, properly so called, with Jutes and Frisians, in South Britain, south of the river Humber; and the Angles, more Scandinavian than German, occupying Britain from the Humber to the river Forth. The Saxons drove the Celtic Britains into Wales and Cornwall, or completely exterminated them. They refused to mix with them. The Saxon race, therefore, south of the Humber, were a purer race than the Angle colonisation north of that river, having less of the Celtic substratum than is to be found in any part of the kingdom. Their occupation of a country to the nearly total extermination of the original inhabitants, is one of the most complete in history. Still, even here there must have been some Celtic substratum, from the conquered Celts being retained as slaves and serfs; and considerable traces of the Celtic language can be shewn to exist in our Saxon English, although slight as compared with that further north.

The Angles, settling north of the Humber, drove the

Celts into the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland; and extending across the Tweed as far as the Forth, conquered and intermixed with the original Celtic population much more than their allies did in the south. The Celts (Picts) of Lowland Scotland, who refused to submit to the conquerors, gradually drew off into the west of Scotland, where they founded the kingdom of the North Britons or Strathcluyd, which extended from the Clyde to the Solway Firth, the most northern limit of which was Dumbarton. Those of the same race on the south of the Tweed, retired into the mountainous district in the west, and established the Celtic kingdom of Cumbria. Both of these maintained their independence for a considerable period.

The element superimposed upon the Celtic north of the Humber was Scandinavian rather than German, Angle rather than Saxon; and the dialect introduced was a branch of the Scandinavian rather than of the German spoken further south. Lowland Scotch is not, as has been frequently supposed, a dialect of the English; it was an offshoot from the Scandinavian family of languages, just as the English was an offshoot from the German branch. The large number of words peculiar to the Lowland Scotch, and which are not found in the English of any period, are Scandinavian, closely allied to the old Norse of Norway, still spoken in Iceland. The Angle belonged to that branch; the Saxon, to the Southern or Proper German.

Caledonia or North Britain after this received a fresh influx of Celtic blood, this time Gaelic rather than Cymric, Erse rather than British—the Dalriad Gaels from Ireland. These settling in the west of Scotland, conquered and incorporated the ancient Gaelic race, of the same family with themselves, who had been driven into the extreme west by the Cymric Picts. Establishing themselves firmly in Argyleshire, these Dalriad Gaels, from that *point d'appui*, extended themselves over the Pictish portion of the island, and gradually conquered, coalesced with, and absorbed the Cymric Picts or ancient Britons, who cease to appear as a distinct people. This union of the Cymric Picts and Dalriad Gaels formed at one time the bulk of the population of the north and west of Scotland—of all, indeed, except the Angle kingdom of Lodiana on the eastern side of the island. These Dalriadic Gaels were called by their neighbours, Scots or vagabonds, and eventually gave their name to the whole of Caledonia, which after this ceases to be used except in poetry; and the northern portion of the island came to be known as Scotland.

It was an amalgamation or absorption of the two branches of the Celts, the Picts or Britons with the Gaels—not a complete conquest, far less an extermination. The Picts or Cymri lost their identity or nationality in that of the Gaelic Scots; hence the difference between the Scottish and the Irish Gael—the former, a mixture of Cymri and Gael; the latter, pure Gael. The Welshman, again, is pure Cymraeg.

Such as it was, it had no effect upon the blood of Lowland Scotland, or upon its language; both remained what they had been since the Angle invasion, chiefly Scandinavian, based upon a British or Cymric substratum.

And now comes one of the most important crosses in our breed, introducing a new element into the blood of the nation, which has raised the United Kingdom to her high position as mistress of the sea, and converted the sluggish Saxon and somewhat heavy Angle into the enterprising Englishman and Scotchman—without which the Englishman might have remained as unenterprising as his parental Saxon, as little a maritime people as the Germans are to this day. This new element was the Scandinavian—Norsemen or Norwegians in Scotland; Danes in England. The mighty and enduring nature of this great colonisation was hardly appreciated by ourselves, until it was pointed out by Worsaae, a Dane.[*] Our histories had made us acquainted with the frequent invasions of Danes and Norsemen, but treated of them rather as partial inroads, carrying fire and sword through the land, than as great and permanent colonisations which effected a radical change in the blood of the population. History told us little more than of the rise and fall of dynasties—it took no note of the entire change of the people. These two different nations, the Danes and Norsemen, are generally confounded, both in tradition and history, under the common name of Danes. The complete conquest of England eventually by the Danes, and the subsequent union of Norway and Denmark, appear to have led to this confusion.

The Norsemen, Norwegians, or Vikingers, conquered the *north* of Scotland—Caithness and Sutherland; hence its name—Sudreland, the most southern portion of the Norwegian possessions on the mainland, and afterwards extended over part of Ross-shire; the Orkney and the Shetland Islands; all the western islands,[†] including the Isle of Man, with a portion of the mainland, Cantyre, &c. These they ruled over for centuries; at one time imposed upon them their language, and displaced the Gaelic, though it again, in its turn, resumed its place after the fall of the Norwegian rule. In Caithness, however, the Gaelic was not again spoken, the population there being eminently Norwegian; and in Shetland and Orkney, Norse continued to be spoken till displaced by the English. In Shetland, it has only ceased since within the last hundred years, and the language yet retains many pure Norse words. This conquest has left numerous traces of its occupation in the names of bays, firths, rivers, and promontories of these countries, which they still retain. The word firth, from the Norse fiord, so common in Scotland, and unknown in England, marks the Norwegian occupation. The alteration in the blood of the people was no less remarkable. The under-sized Celt grew into a finely developed Norseman: instead of dreading the sea, and paddling along its shores in a miserable leathern coracle, he became a bold seaman, although he has strangely forgotten or perversely ignored the source from whence he derived this superior development of frame, his blue eyes and light hair, and straight limbs, instead of the bowed legs of his ancestors. The blood of the eastern coast of Scotland was even more completely changed by the Scandinavian conquest—here Norwegian-Danish, rather than pure Norwegian—and the fine sea-faring population along the eastern shores of Scotland, attest the improvement effected upon the breed. The greater number of names borne by that population, and ending in *son* (the Danish *sen*), are of Norse extraction: Swanson (Svendsen), Manson (Magnusen), Henderson (Henricsen), Duncansen, &c. Johnson, one of the commonest names in England, is also very common in Iceland, both coming from the same source—Norway. Ronald and Ronaldson have the same extraction (Ragnvald).

The Celt or Gael was either completely incorporated with the Scandinavian conquerors on the sea-coast, or driven into the interior, where he took refuge in the fastnesses of the Highlands. A pure Celt in Scotland, if he exists at all, is only to be looked for in the Central Highlands.

No less marked and lasting was the effect produced upon the population in the north of England by the Danes. Northumberland, Durham, Westmoreland and Cumberland, Lancashire and Yorkshire, were the great area of the Danish colonisation—an historical fact, indeed, but one amply corroborated by the characters, physical and moral, of the people themselves. The south of England, afterwards conquered by the Danes, and forming for a time a portion of their dominion, was held more as a conquest than as a permanent colonisation, and had its population little altered, although a considerable infusion of Danish blood took place along the whole eastern coast. The Anglo-Saxon race owes much of its bold spirit of enterprise, its love of freedom, and its maritime skill and daring, to this Danish strain.

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[*] *The Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland.* By J. J. A. Worsaae.

[†] The Norwegian kingdom in the Hebrides was called the Sudreyjar or Southern Islands, as that in Orkney and the Shetlands was the Nordreyar or Northern Islands. From this appellation of the Hebrides came the title of the Bishop of Sodor and Man.

Last of all comes the Norman Conquest, introducing the Frenchified Scandinavian—that wonderful race of men, half Norseman, half Celto-Frank, sprung from a band of adventurers from the shores of the Baltic—Norwegians, Danes, and Swedes, who had settled in the west of France, and conquered Normandy. Here, intermixing with the native French, they compounded a race that at one time threatened to overturn Europe, and has given kings to half her thrones. Being comparatively few in number, and marrying French women, their descendants appear in a generation or two to have abandoned their native Norse for the language of their adopted country. Conquerors of England, the ethnological effect of the Norman Conquest was at first upon the higher ranks rather than upon the mass of the population—upon the nobility rather than upon the people. In time, however, it circulated through the whole body, and this cross has no doubt exercised an important effect in improving the Saxon race, and raising it to its high pitch of perfection. The Danish portion of the kingdom, that north of the Humber, offered the most strenuous opposition to the Normans, and was the last to submit to their rule. It was this great split of England into two sections, the Anglo-Dane and the Saxon, that facilitated the Norman Conquest. Partial as it was in its effects upon the general population, from the small number of the conquerors, it has produced an important alteration upon the ruling families both of Scotland and England. Most of the English nobility date the foundation of their families from this race. The immediate effect upon Scotland of the Norman Conquest was sending a large portion of the Saxon and Anglo-Saxon population from England into Scotland. Malcolm III. of Scotland had married Margaret, a relation of Edward the Confessor, and sister of Edgar Atheling, the heir of the Saxon line in England. To her court flocked all the Saxon nobility who refused to submit to the Norman rule. Many of the Normans, discontented with their lot, or in search of new adventures, followed at a later period. From these two sources, many of the chief families in Scotland are descended; and a host of names, considered to be good Scottish families, are borne by the descendants of these Anglo-Saxons and Normans. Bruce, the Stewart race, the Sinclairs (from the Norman St Clair), Gordon, Hamilton, Ogilvy, Murray, Drummond, Hay (De la Haye), Fraser (De la Friselle), and a host of others, are all of Norman extraction. The head of the Campbells, the Argyle family, are of the same race: Beauchamp, or Campo Bello, a Norman, married the heiress of Awe, daughter of Sir Colin of Awe, and changed her name and that of all her clan to Campbell. Before that time, the clan had borne the name of their great founder, Sir Colin More, or Colin the Great, and were called the sons of Colin, or, by the Irish, M'Callens. The Douglases, on the other hand, were a Flemish family; while some of the present Highland, or so-called Celtic clans, are descended from the Norwegian conquerors. The MacDougals and Ronaldsons are descended from one of the Norse vikings, Jarl Somerled, who, in 1156, made himself master of all the Hebrides, from Mull to the Isle of Man, and a portion of the mainland of Scotland. He left two sons. Dugal, the younger, succeeded to Argyle and Lorn as his patrimony, and founded the clan or family of MacDougal; while the eldest son, Ragnvald or Reginald, obtained Cantyre and the islands: from him sprung Clan-Ranald and the family of the Ronaldsons.* The MacLeods of Skye are the descendants of another of these Norse vikings, and still use the family name of Torquil. Norman is also a favourite family name of the MacLeods.

These men soon identified themselves with the people they conquered. Amongst the Celtic race, they adopted the dress and even the language of the Celts, became completely assimilated with them, and are afterwards found as heads of Highland clans. Hence we have the Scandinavian and Norman clans of Sinclair, Stewart, MacDougal, &c., their descendants considering themselves Celts. Nor is this to be wondered at. It appears to depend upon a principle of our nature. Alexander the Great gave mortal offence to his Macedonian followers by adopting the dress and habits of the barbarians he conquered. The Norwegian king, Magnus, surnamed Barfod or Barelegs, who made himself master of the Hebrides (A.D. 1096), had this sobriquet given to him by his Norwegian subjects from his adopting the kilt, and as Barelegs he stands upon the roll of history. Conquerors, if few in number, and especially when they intermarry with the conquered race, generally end by adopting the habits, dress, and language of their subjects.

In Scotland, so strangely has the ethnological history of our race been forgotten, that Lowland Scotsmen are apt to forget their origin, and claim for themselves the history and traditions and fame of the race they conquered. Descendants of Angle invaders, Norwegian vikings, Saxon lords, and Norman barons, have donned the tartan, and taken their place among the Highland clans. It might be dangerous to tell a MacDougal that he was the descendant of a Norwegian pirate; or a Bruce, a Stewart, or a Sinclair, that they were sprung from Norman adventurers—men who swept the unfortunate Gael before them in their mail-clad strength, drove them into the fastnesses of the mountains, or ruled over them as serfs with a rod of iron. Our own fascinating novelist has, more than any other, tended to increase this unhistorical confusion—for these times are so completely within the historical age, that they cease to belong to the more uncertain realms of ethnology—and has appropriated for his own race the fitful and transient victories the Celts gained from them. In our own day, patriotic Scotsmen often claim for their Teutonic fellow-countrymen all the renown gained by our Highland regiments, supposing they were really composed of Celts, which, however, is more than doubtful.

This may be taken as a tolerably correct outline of the ethnology of Great Britain. The difference between the two sections is not so broad as some may have imagined; neither is it so close as others have maintained. 'It is not so broad as a church-door, nor so deep as a well, yet it is enough.' We see that there is a considerable difference of race between the Englishman and Scotchman; that although the Lowland Scotsman is not a Celt, and far nearer akin to the Englishman than he is to his Highland fellow-subject, yet there is one great distinction of race between the two people. In the Scotsman, the Scandinavian element preponderates; in the Englishman, the German. The old grudge between these two branches of one great stock, shews itself in its original area. It is constantly breaking out in Holstein, where the two elements are ever jarring—the German *versus* the Dane. It is this that separates the population of our island into two races, differing in dialect, habits, and customs; but, above all, in their mental temperament, in their ideas and modes of thinking, looking often at the same subject from two entirely different points of view.

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* Worsaae.

Ethnologically, the people of Great Britain consist of three, if not four, varieties of man—the Norman-Saxon, south of the Humber; the Angle-Norwegian-Dane, north of that river; with the Celtic (Cymraeg) population in Cornwall and Wales; and the Celto-Scandinavian in Cumberland and the Highlands of Scotland. Where, then, is the true Englishman to be found—the Anglander, properly so called—the man from Angleland or Jutland, whose race or breed is identical with his name? He will not be found in Saxon England, or England south of the river Humber—except in Norfolk and Suffolk, where the Angles also settled and founded the kingdom of the East Angles—but north of that river, between it and the rivers Forth and Clyde. The Scotsman, again, if race and name were synonymous, exists only in the descendants of the Dalriadic Gaels in the Western Highlands. Politically, these different people formed the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, the river Tweed separating the Scotsman from the Englishman. How, then, came this distinct nationality, separated by the Tweed, to arise? How came the Angle-Saxon-Norwegian, north of the Tweed, to separate so broadly, not only from the Norman-Saxon south of the Humber, but from the Angle-Saxon-Dane south of the Tweed, almost identically of the same blood with himself?[*] The truth is, there appears to be a nationality that springs up independent of blood or pedigree. A political nationality may become stronger than an ethnological one. Separated by political boundaries, the men on the two sides of the Tweed, sprung from one race, in time grew into two people strongly opposed to each other. The Angles south of the Tweed, separated from their own nearest kinsmen north of that river, and joined politically to the Saxons south of the Humber, soon came to entertain feelings of intense hostility to their brethren on its northern banks. The men north of the Tweed, 'Celt and Angle, Saxon exile and Norman adventurer, grew and welded into one distinct nationality,' which reserved its *greatest* antipathy for its nearest neighbours—those who were most nearly allied to it by blood, as well as nearest to it in position. The moss-trooper north of the Tweed did not stop to inquire into ethnological affinities when he harried the lands of Northumberland; nor did the Northumbrian rough-rider feel any remorse of conscience when he plundered his brother-kinsmen in Roxburgh or Berwickshire. Mutual injuries, wrongs, and offences, soon rendered the animosity springing up between these near relations intense and enduring. And this is just what generally happens with sections of the same people politically separated. The Frank on the west bank of the Rhine came to regard the Franks on the eastern bank with far more jealousy and dislike than he had for people further from him, from whom he had received no injuries.

Nationality, then, is a something that may spring up independent of blood or race, and is soon formed by isolation, and in a few generations will impress upon a people an indelible character that no time can remove. As soon as a nation or portion of a nation, a tribe or section, or even a cluster of families, break off from the main stock, and become in any degree isolated, they take a form of development peculiar to themselves: their language, if it was originally one, separates into two different dialects, which in time become mutually unintelligible; the physical characters undergo a change, and they acquire a peculiar and distinct physiognomy. This is much influenced by climate, latitude, altitude, by the nature of their food—its abundance or otherwise—and the habits of life induced by the different modes required to procure their sustenance. Hence, the fertility of the soil, or its sterility, will exert a powerful influence in forming the character. No less are the mental faculties acted upon by external agents, and directed into different channels. The inhabitants of a mountainous region differ from the dwellers in the plains frequently as much in mental temperament as in physical features. The result of all this is, that, in a very few generations, the characteristics, physical and moral, of individuals become stamped upon the whole community, and a distinct nationality is produced, with habits, customs, feelings, language, laws, and government peculiar to itself. Wars spring up between the people so separated; national animosities soon arise, and widen the breach yet further. The Scandinavian and the German are themselves originally of one great stock—the Teutonic; though now so widely apart, and perpetuating their rival discords through their descendants. The Jews, with their distinct nationality, which they have preserved through all reverses to the present day, developed that nationality amongst nations closely allied to them in descent and language. Of the same race with the Canaanites, Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites, &c., speaking the same language, or a closely allied dialect, and separated by the one element of religious belief, how intense became their antipathy to each other, which ended only with the extermination of the one by the other. In America, we have the same thing being repeated before our eyes—a nationality already complete, distinct, peculiar: sprung from the Anglo-Saxon race, how widely have they already departed from it, even in features and physical characters—still more in mental temperament; and already do we see this people of one race splitting into two great branches, the northern and the southern, placed in antagonism to each other, and developing in two most opposite directions. Language does not alter so readily nor so rapidly in these days, when it is kept more stationary by means of books, as it did in more remote times, when it was transmitted orally from father to son; yet, even in America, we can see traces of a new dialect being formed. The more remote and isolated a nation is, however, the less does the dialect alter. The people of Iceland still speak the Norse of the ninth century, while the parent state, Norway, has greatly modified its language.

Nationality is simply the growth or development of any section of a people into its own peculiar form. It is much assisted by community of race; but it will often take place in spite of it, or in opposition to it, and sometimes in a most perverse form. In Ireland, the men who have always been loudest in their outcry against England, and strongest in their hatred of her, were not the unfortunate Celtic people whom the Anglo-Saxons had conquered and tyrannised over. No; they were the descendants of the Earl Strongbow and his English conquerors, who had settled in Ireland. Daniel O'Connell himself was more of a Saxon or a Norman, than of the ancient Irish or Celtic stock. The abuse of the Saxons is a favourite subject with all the Celtic races, who call all Germans by this name, just as the Germans apply the term Welsh, Walloon, Wallach, to all foreigners, Celts, Romans, &c. But, after all, Ireland received no injuries from England so long as England was Saxon. It had been indeed conquered in part by both Norwegians and Danes, but it was not until England had become Norman that the English invaded Ireland.

Nationality seems to be a great law of the human heart. It cannot be upset by argument: it may be illogical, is frequently absurd, but it is a great fact. A universal brotherhood is a dream of philanthropy:

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[*] The late Hugh Miller, in his *First Impressions of England*, remarks on the strong similarity between the Lowland Scotch and the population of the north of England. It was not until he had got into Saxon England that he felt he had come amongst a different race.

it never has existed, and never probably will. National antipathies never entirely wear out, however closely nations may become united. Nothing is more easy to shew than that Englishmen and Scotchmen are sprung from nearly one and the same people; speak nearly the same language; and politically united, are one, or should be one, indivisible unity. Nothing is more certain than that they are two, with different characters, different ideas, different idiosyncrasies, different religions, or forms of religion, to which each are strongly and sincerely attached. Even in France, where the national fusion into one whole is perhaps more complete than in any other nation composed of so many diverse races, there are some broad lines of demarcation yet to be seen. The peasant of Normandy still shews in his sea-faring predilections his Scandinavian origin, and differs widely from his Celtic fellow-subject in Brittany, and still more from the Iberian Gascon south of the Loire.

The Scotch and English are as much united as two people so different can ever be; and he who would force them into a closer union, will only separate them more widely. Like two horses unaccustomed to run in double harness, if braced up too tight, they will begin to kick and plunge; but if allowed to run free, they may pull pretty well together. Let them remain, therefore, as they are: two branches growing out of one stem; apart from each other, yet belonging to each other; strengthening by their union the great trunk from whence they have both sprung.

ONE OF THE JEAMESES.

SEASONS of war, of civil strife, and of public tumult, often draw forth the *best*, as well as the *worst* qualities of human nature. The names of heroes who have borne a prominent part in this world's struggles, who have shed their life-blood in their country's cause, or have dared to raise their voice in behalf of a sovereign doomed to death by his people, have been handed down with honour to posterity; and well is it that names such as these should be immortalised. But in life's more hidden paths, how many a noble deed has been achieved, how many an act of self-sacrifice silently performed, which will never be known until that day when every hidden thing shall be made manifest! It is one of these unknown or long-forgotten heroes whom we are now about to introduce to our readers, in the hope that his brief but eventful history may not prove uninteresting.

Amongst the attendants of the hapless Queen Marie Antoinette, there was one named Valentin. In her service he began the career of self-devotion which he pursued through life. At the Tuileries, on the fatal 21st of June 1791, he fought in defence of his sovereign, and was carried, wounded, from the palace. Time passed on, and Valentin, recovered from his wounds, sought another service.

He offered himself to the Marquis of Caraccioli, formerly Neapolitan ambassador to the French court, but now a ruined man. The marquis at first declined his services, assuring him that his broken fortunes would not admit of his keeping a valet; but Valentin seemed to feel a singular attraction towards this Neapolitan nobleman, and well-nigh insisted on attaching himself to his fortunes. Evil days, however, were in store for the once wealthy and popular ambassador. Compelled by poverty to live in one of the most crowded streets of Paris, he fell into ill health, and during this time of sickness, was unable to procure the most ordinary comforts and even necessaries of life.

The faithful Valentin, who in his earlier years had been a turner by profession, caused the marquis to be removed to an airy apartment belonging to a chair-maker in the Faubourg St Antoine. Here he not only paid the rent of the room by working for the landlord, but also earned enough to maintain his suffering master.

Day by day, however, the illness of the marquis assumed a more serious character; increased care and more abundant nourishment were required by the invalid. Poor Valentin, with a *mistaken*, perchance, yet generous pride, would not make known the destitute condition of the marquis to any amongst his former wealthy friends; but when his own earnings proved insufficient, he appealed to the government of the day for help; his application, however, proved fruitless, and Caraccioli died in penury and want.

When Valentin stood by his master's corpse, he felt as if he had never till then known how dear Caraccioli was to his heart. He could not endure the thought that this noble man, of illustrious name and ancient lineage, should be committed to a pauper's grave. He accordingly hastened to a notary, sold, for the sum of L.12, a small property which he had purchased with the savings of his earlier years, discharged the few debts contracted during the illness of Caraccioli, and with the remainder of this sum, paid for the unpretending funeral of the once honoured ambassador of Naples.

About this time, Madame Junot, Duchess of Abrantes, was setting up her establishment on her return from Lisbon, whither she had accompanied her husband on an embassy to the Portuguese court. A good old abbé who had become acquainted with Valentin, and knew the generous self-devotion he had manifested towards his late master, mentioned the circumstances of his past history to Madame d'Abrantes, and the very next day he was engaged in her service.

The heart of the faithful servant was quickly won by the sympathising interest with which his new mistress listened to his recital of the wrongs and misfortunes of the marquis, and his gratitude knew no bounds when she erected a monument over his master's tomb.

In this happy servitude, time passed quickly with Valentin, until, in the year 1804, he inherited a small property in his native province. He was then about fifty-five years of age, and Madame Junot, on learning his unexpected good-fortune, congratulated him on being now in a position to retire from service, and settle in a house of his own, with a modest competence.

'Do you, then, intend to dismiss me from your service, madame?' exclaimed Valentin in a sorrowful tone.

'Dismiss you! My poor Valentin, why, what on earth could put such an idea into your head?' exclaimed Madame Junot.

'I thought my lady spoke of my going away.'

'I only congratulated you on the prospect of being henceforth your own master,' rejoined the duchess; 'but if you are not disposed to enjoy your liberty, that is no business of mine, and certainly, if you wait for me to *dismiss* you, you will remain with me for ever.'

Not long after this conversation, Junot, having incurred the emperor's displeasure, was superseded as governor of Paris, and sent to command at Arras. This change of position of course involved some alteration in domestic arrangements, and many attendants were dismissed from the service of the duke. To Valentin, however, was deputed the confidential post of superintending the establishment which Madame d'Abrantes still maintained in Paris. He was chosen for this post as being one in whose integrity the most absolute trust might be reposed. Madame d'Abrantes was therefore much surprised, on the eve of her departure for Arras, to see Valentin enter the apartment with an air of deep agitation. His countenance was pale as death, and when he attempted to speak, his voice faltered, and it seemed as though he could not utter a word. Unable to conceive the cause of his distress, Madame d'Abrantes said, in a soothing tone: 'I hope, Valentin, you are not vexed at being left behind here in Paris: you know it cannot be helped; the duke and I chose you for this post on account of the unbounded confidence we place in your integrity.'

'O no, madame, it is not that,' faltered forth the poor man; 'I know that it is right I should stay; indeed, I should have asked leave to stay, even if your grace had not commanded me to do so. It is not that; it is—that people say my lord and lady are in disgrace with the First Consul, just as my poor old master was in disgrace with the Neapolitan court—and my lord and lady are going to take the children with them: t will be an expensive journey; and just at this moment the general has had such heavy expenses, this must take him by surprise. In short, madame, forgive me, but I have been to M. Tricard, the notary, and I asked him for my money, without telling him my reason for wanting it; and here it is. If my lord and lady will only be so good as to use it just as though it were their own.'

'Never,' exclaims Madame Junot in her memoirs—'never can I forget this moment: it is graven upon my heart rather than upon my memory, and time can never efface it. Had I needed the money, the recollection that Valentin was my own servant, would not have caused me to hesitate for a moment in accepting his generous offer. I felt that his noble conduct through life had raised him to an equality with myself—to the highest rank in the social scale.'

Junot himself had entered the apartment while this conversation was going on between the faithful Valentin and his mistress. He listened in silence to the generous offer of this noble-hearted man, who was not even aware of his presence. But when Valentin laid upon the table the four bags, containing his 3700 francs—his little earthly all—the kind-hearted general could no longer contain himself, but stepping forward, clasped the worthy valet to his heart, as though he had been his own brother. To Valentin's great sorrow, however, M. and Madame d'Abrantes declined the proffered sum, of which, in fact, they did not in the slightest degree stand in need. He seemed, however, so deeply pained by their refusal of his offer, that at last Junot exclaimed: 'Well, Valentin, I will take your money, but only on one condition—my man of business shall pay you 10 per cent. for it so long as you live.'

This condition was faithfully fulfilled; but, upon the death of the duke, Valentin, knowing his master's property to be cumbered with debts, insisted upon not receiving more than 5 per cent. interest for his money. Madame d'Abrantes knew him too well to grieve his faithful heart by pressing the matter any further in this her own hour of distress; but, on the return of the Bourbons, she told his history to the Duchess of Angoulême, who bestowed upon him a pension of L.50 a year, in consideration of the service he had rendered to the Queen Marie Antoinette in 1791.

About this time, Valentin's health becoming enfeebled, he retired from the service of Madame d'Abrantes, and settled at Belleville. Here he lived to a good old age, beloved and respected by all who knew him, and having nobly earned, in the course of his eventful life, the honourable title of a 'good and faithful servant.'

A BLESSED PROVIDENCE FOR OUR CONTINENTAL NEIGHBOURS.

A FOREIGN gentleman remarked to the Rev. Dr Guthrie of Edinburgh: 'What a blessed Providence! you Anglo-Saxons are a drunken race!' He explained his meaning to be, that such was the outrivalling energy and industry of the Anglo-Saxon people, in England, America, every where, that but for this happy drawback, no foreigners had a chance in competition with them. The reverend gentleman declares that he felt the remark to be *very snell.* It might be a jest; but there is many a true word so spoken, and we fear this is of the number. Perhaps no man has had more opportunities of studying the condition of the lower class of people in our large cities than this same Dr Guthrie; and he declares that, in all his efforts amongst them in Edinburgh, he has met the vice of drunkenness at every step as a difficulty in the way of every reformation: it destroys more men and women, body and soul, breaks more hearts, ruins more families, than all other vices put together. In his visitations, nothing struck him more than to find more than half of the families in the church-yard. Numberless children, he says, are carried off, wholly in consequence of the drunken habits of their parents.

The tee-totallers almost seem to prove too much. They are fond of adducing Mr Porter's calculation, that fifty millions are spent annually on drink in the United Kingdom. One is at a loss to understand whence the money comes. Yet some of the separate facts are startling enough. In Musselburgh, a town near Edinburgh, containing 7000 inhabitants, fishermen, net-makers, &c., the number of public-houses and spirit-shops is 57, being one for every 120 people, or we may assume, for every 25 adult males. In Dundee, a town of 80,000 people, the spirit-shops and taverns are 364—a more moderate, but still large proportion. In Edinburgh, wherever the poorer class of people dwell, places for the sale of liquor abound. In the central street of the Old Town, less than a mile long, there are 97; and in each of twenty-one of these, the amount of whisky dispensed, chiefly among the very poor, in a quarter of a year, was found to be 400 gallons. Wherever a poor street is interjected in the better districts of the city, it is found to be thickly planted with spirit-shops, most of which, in their handsome, goodly style of furnishing, speak strongly of what they do in the way of draining the pockets of the humbler classes. The writer had the curiosity, one day, to count those in a short street near his own residence, and found them nine in number, being a greater number than all the other shops put together. In a section of another street, about 150 yards in length, he found five. We are also informed of a district of the town, containing 500 families, where the number of licensed spirit-shops is 19. What a strange spectacle it forms in a land assumedly civilised, rational, and Christian—so much permitted temptation in the way of the poor, all looking so gay and so goodly, sanctioned by law, beyond even remonstrance from philanthropy, and yet manifestly leading multitudes to destruction, and forming a frightful counterpoise to every influence for good that the spirit of modern civilisation can supply! It may be foolish to suppose, as some do, that a direct extinction of the evil is practicable; but when we think of what the evil is, what appalling calamities in the forms of poverty, crime, and infectious disease it produces, we rather wonder that the political system of our country can bear its further existence for a day, than that a few enthusiasts have dreamed of its forcible suppression.

Our southern neighbours have strongly proclaimed their disinclination to have any shortening of the hours of public-houses, on Sundays or otherwise. In Scotland, an act imposing certain restrictions of this nature has been submitted to with comparative resignation. In Scotland, however, we must remember, the evil is of a direr kind, in consequence of the more demoralising character of the favourite drink. There was here a greater call upon the middle classes to endure certain inconveniences for the sake of their humbler brethren. It is a kind of measure which no lover of individual liberty can approve of; yet it has in this instance done some good, as far as the diminution of cases of people taken up as drunk and disorderly is concerned. Of that diminution, indeed, doubts have been expressed, but, we believe, without just foundation. It is the one comforting circumstance in a wide-spread scene of degradation and woe.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXXIII.—TRANSLATING THE 'SIGN.'

This discovery brought us to a halt. A consultation ensued, in which all took part; but as usual, the others listened to the opinions of the prairie-men, and especially to that of Rube.

The old trapper was inclined to sulk for some time, and acted as if he meant to withhold his advice. Nothing 'nuffed' him more than to have his word contradicted or his skill called in question. I have known him to be 'out of sorts' for days, from having his woodcraft doubted by some one whom he deemed less skilled than himself; and, indeed, there were few of his kind whose knowledge of the wilderness was at all comparable with his. He was not always in the right, but generally where his instincts failed, it was idle to try further. In the present case, the man who had thoughtlessly doubted him was one of the 'greenest' of the party, but this only aggravated the matter in the eyes of Old Rube.

'Sich a fellur as you,' he said, giving a last dig to the offending ranger—'sich a fellur as you oughter git yur head shet up: thet ur tongue o' yourn keeps a gwine like a bull's tail in fly-time. Wagh!'

As the man made no reply to this rather rough remonstrance, Rube's 'dander' soon smoothed down, and once more getting cool, he turned his attention to the business of the hour.

That there had been Indians upon the ground was now an ascertained fact; the peculiar shoeing of the horses rendered it indubitable. Mexican horses, if shod at all, would have had a shoeing of iron—at least on their fore-feet. Wild mustangs would have had the hoof naked; while the tracks of Texan or American horses could have been easily told, either from the peculiar shoeing or the superior size of their hoofs. The horses that had galloped over that ground were neither wild, Texan, nor Mexican: Indian they must have been.

Although the one track first examined might have settled the point, it was a fact of too much importance to be left under the slightest doubt. The presence of Indians meant the presence of enemies—foes dire and deadly; and it was with something more than feelings of mere curiosity that my companions scrutinised the sign.

The ashes were blown out from several others, and these carefully studied. Additional facts were brought to light by those Champollions of the prairie—Rube and Garey. Whoever rode the horses, had been going in a gallop. They had not ridden long in one course; but here and there had turned and struck off in new directions. There had been a score or so of them. No two had been galloping together; their tracks converged or crossed one another—now zigzagging, now running in right lines, or sweeping in curves and circles over the plain.

All this knowledge the trackers had obtained in less than ten minutes, simply by riding round the place. Not to disturb them in their diagnosis, the rest of us halted upon the spot where the new tracks had been first observed, and there awaited the result of their scrutiny.

In ten minutes' time both came back to us; they had read the sign to their satisfaction, and needed no further light.

That sign had disclosed to them one fact of more significance than all the rest. Of course, we all knew that the Indian horsemen had gone over the ground before the grass had been burnt; but how long before? We had no difficulty in making out that it was upon that same day, and since the rising of the sun—these were trifles easily ascertained; but at *what hour* had they passed? Late, or early? With the steed, before, or after him?

About this point I was most anxious, but I had not the slightest idea that it could be decided by the 'sign.' To my astonishment, those cunning hunters returned to tell me, not only the very hour at which the steed had passed the spot, but also that the Indian horsemen had been riding *after him!* Clairvoyance could scarcely have gone farther.

The old trapper had grown expletive, more than was his wont. It was no longer a matter of tracking the white steed. Indians were near. Caution had become necessary, and neither the company nor counsel of the humblest was to be scorned. We might soon stand in need of the strength, even of the weakest in our party.

Freely, then, the trackers communicated their discoveries, in answer to my interrogation.

'The white hoss,' said Rube, 'must 'a been hyur 'bout four hour ago, kalkerlatin the rate at which he wur a gwine, an kalkerlatin how fur he hed ter kum. He hain't 'a stopped nowhur; an 'ceptin i' the thicket, he hez gallipt the rest o' the way—thet's clur. Wal, we knows the distance, thurfor we knows the time—thet's clur too; an four hour's 'bout the mark, I reck'n—preehaps a leetle less, an alser preehaps a leetle more. Now, furrermore to the peint. Them niggurs hez been eyther clost arter 'im, in view o' the critter, or follerin 'im on the trail—the one or the t'other—an which 'taint possyble to tell wi' this hyur sign no-how-cum-somever. But thet they *wur arter* 'im, me an Bill's made out clur as mud—thet we sartintly hez.'

'How have you ascertained that they were after?'

'The tracks, young fellur—the tracks.'

'But how by them?'

'Easy as eatin hump-rib: them as wur made by the white hoss ur *un'ermost*.'

The conclusion was clear indeed. The Indians must have been *after* him.

We stayed no longer upon the spot, but once more sending the trackers forward, moved on after them.

We had advanced about half a mile farther, when the horse-tracks, hitherto scattered, and tending in different directions, became merged together, as though the Indians had been riding, not in single file—as is their ordinary method—but in an irregular body of several abreast.

The trackers, after proceeding along this new trail for a hundred yards or so, deliberately drew up; and dismounting, bent down upon their hands and knees, as if once more to examine the sign. The rest of us halted a little behind, and watched their proceedings without offering to question them.

Both were observed to be busy blowing aside the ashes, not from any particular track, but from the full breadth of the trail.

In a few minutes, they succeeded in removing the black dust from a stretch of several yards—so that the numerous hoof-prints could be distinctly traced, side by side, or overlapping and half obliterating one another.

Rube now returned to where they had commenced; and then once more leisurely advancing upon his knees, with eyes close to the surface, appeared to scrutinise the print of every hoof separately.

Before he had reached the spot where Garey was still engaged in clearing off the dust, he rose to his feet with an air that told he was satisfied, and turning to his companion, cried out:

'Don't bother furrer, Bill: it ur jest as I thort; they've roped 'im, by G—!'

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE STEED LASOED.

It was not the emphatic tone in which this announcement was made that produced within me conviction of its truth; I should have been convinced without that. I was better than half prepared for the intelligence thus rudely conveyed; for I was myself not altogether unskilled in that art of which my trapper-companions were masters.

I had observed the sudden convergence of the horse-tracks; I had noticed also, that, after coming together, the animals had proceeded at a slow pace—at a walk. I needed only to perceive the hoof of the steed among the others, to know that he no longer ran free—that he was a captive.

This the tracker had found; hence the decisive declaration that the Indians had 'roped' him—in other words, had caught him with their lazoes.

'Sartint they've tuk 'im,' asserted Rube, in answer to an interrogatory: 'sartint sure; hyur's his track clur as daylight. He's been led hyur at the eend o' a laryette; he's been nigh the middle o' the crowd—some in front—some hev been arter 'im—thet's how they've gone past hyur. Wagh!' continued the speaker, once more turning his eyes upon the trail, 'thur's been a good grist on 'em—twunty or more; an ef this child don't miskalkerlate, thet ain't the hul o' the niggurs; *it* ain't! 'Tur only some o' 'em as gallliped out to rope the hoss. I'd lay my rifle agin a Mexican blunderbox, thur's a bigger party than this nigh at hand somewhur hyur. By Geehosophat, thur's boun to be, sartint as sunup!'

The suspicion that had half formed itself in my mind was no longer hypothetical; the sign upon the trail had settled that: it was now a positive intelligence—a conviction. The steed had been taken; he and his rider were captive in the hands of the Indians.

This knowledge brought with it a crowd of new thoughts, in which emotions of the most opposite character were mingled together.

The first was a sensation of joy. The steed had been captured, and by human beings. Indians at least were men, and possessed human hearts. Though in the rider they might recognise the lineaments of their pale-faced foes—not so strongly neither—yet a woman, and in such a dilemma; what reason could they have for hostility to her? None; perhaps the very opposite passion might be excited by the spectacle of her helpless situation. They would see before them the victim of some cruel revenge—the act, too, of their own enemies; this would be more likely to inspire them with sympathy and pity; they would relieve her from her perilous position; would minister to her wants and wounds; would tenderly nurse and cherish her: yes; of all this I felt assured. They were human; how could they do otherwise?

Such was the first rush of my reflections on becoming assured that the steed had been captured by Indians—that Isolina was in their hands. I only thought of her safety—that she was rescued from pain and peril, perhaps from death; and the thought was a gleam of joy.

Alas! only a gleam; and the reflections that followed were painfully bitter.

I could not help thinking of the character of the savages into whose hands she had fallen. If they were the same band that had harried the frontier town, then were they southern Indians—Comanche or Lipan. The report said one or other; and it was but too probable. True, the remnant of Shawanos and Delawares, with the Kickapoos and Texan Cherokees, sometimes stray as far as the banks of the Rio Grande; but the conduct was not theirs: these tribes, from long intercourse with whites, have been inducted into a sort of semi-civilisation; and their hereditary hostility for the pale-face has died out. Pillage and murder are no longer their trade; it could not have been they who had made the late foray. It might have been 'Wild Cat' with his wicked Seminoles, now settled on the Texan frontier; but the act was more in keeping with the character of the mescal-eating Apachés, who of late years had been pushing their expeditions far down the river. Even so—it mattered little; Apachés are but Comanches, or rather Comanches, Apachés, and whether the Indians on whose trail we were standing were one or the other—whether Apaché, Lipan, Comanche, or their allies Caygüa, Waco, or Pawnee-Pict, it mattered not; one and all were alike; one or other of them, my reflections were bitterly the same. Well understood I the character of these red men of the south; so far differing from their kindred of the north—so far different from that ideal type of cold continence it has pleased the poet and the writer of romance to ascribe to them. The reverse of the medal was before my mind's eye; the memory of many a scene was in my thoughts, of many a tale I had heard, illustrating the uxorious disposition, the wild, unbridled wantonness of these lords of the southern plains.

Not then did I dwell long on such thoughts; for they had their influence in urging me onward.

But there was another reason for our rapid advance: all of us were under the extreme agony of thirst—literally gasping for water; and thus physical suffering impelled us to ride forward as fast as our jaded horses could carry us over the ground.

Timber was at length before our eyes, green foliage, looking all the fresher and brighter from contrast with the black plain which it bounded. It was a grove of cotton-woods, skirting a prairie-stream; and beyond this the fire had not extended.

Wild joyous cries escaped from men and horses, as their eyes rested upon the limpid stream. The men leaped out of their saddles, and without a thought of drowning, rushed breast-deep into the water. Some lifted the crystal liquid in their palms; others, more impatient, bent down, and plunging their faces in the flood, drank *à la mode du cheval.*

I noticed that the trappers behaved less recklessly than the rest; before going down to drink, the eyes of both were directed, with instinctive caution, along the banks, and into the timber.

Close to where we had halted, I observed a crossing, where numerous tracks of animals formed in the soil a deep, well-beaten path. Rube's eyes were upon it, and I saw that they were glistening with unusual excitement.

'Told 'ee so!' cried he, after a short survey: 'yander's thur trail—*war-trail*, by the Eturnal!'

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE 'INDIOS BRAVOS.'

You may be asking, what the trapper meant by a war-trail? It has been a phrase of frequent occurrence with us. It is a phrase of the frontier. Even at the eleventh hour, let me offer its explanation.

For half a century—ay, for three centuries and more—even since the conquest itself—the northern frontier of Mexico has been in, what is termed in old-fashioned phraseology, a 'disturbed state.' Though the semi-civilised Azteca, and the kindred races of town-dwelling Indians, easily yielded to the sword of the Spanish conquerors, far different has been the history of the wild tribes—the free hunters of the plains. Upon those mighty steppes that occupy the whole central area of the North American continent, dwell tribes of Indians—nations they might be called—who neither know, nor ever have known, other rule than that of their own chieftains. Even when Spain was at her strongest, she failed to subjugate the 'Indios bravos' of her frontiers, who to the present hour have preserved their wild freedom. I speak not of the great nations of the northern prairies—Sioux and Cheyenne—Blackfeet and Crow—Pawnee and Arapahoe. With these the Spanish race scarcely came in contact. I refer more particularly to the tribes whose range impinges upon the frontiers of Mexico—Comanche, Lipan, Utah, Apaché, and Navajo.

It is not in the annals of Spain to prove that any one of these tribes ever yielded to her conquering sword; and equally a failure has been the attempt to wheedle them into a fanatical civilisation by the much-boasted conquest of the mission. Free, then, the prairie Indians are from white man's rule, and free have they been, as if the keels of Columbus had never ploughed the Carib Sea.

But although they have preserved their independence for three centuries, for three centuries have they never known peace. Between the red Indian and the white Iberian, along the frontier of Northern Mexico, a war-border has existed since the days of Cortez to the present hour—constantly shifting north or south, but ever extended from east to west, from ocean to ocean, through wide degrees of longitude. North of this border ranges the 'Indio bravo;' south of it dwells his degenerate and conquered kinsman, the 'Indio manso,' not in the 'tents,' but in the towns of his Spanish conqueror; the former, free as the prairie wind—the latter, yoked to a condition of 'peon' vassalage, with chains as strong as those of slavery itself. The neutral belt of hostile ground lies between—on the one side guarded by a line of garrisoned forts (*presidios*); on the other, sheltered from attack by the wild and waterless desert.

I have stated that this war-border has been constantly shifting either northward or southward. Such was its history up to the beginning of the present cycle. Since then, a remarkable change has been going forward in the relative position of Indian and Iberian; and the line of hostile ground has been moving only in one direction—continually *towards the south!* To speak in less poetical phrase, the red man has been encroaching upon the territory of the white man—the so-called savage has been gaining ground upon the domain of civilisation. Not slowly or gradually either, but by gigantic strides—by the conquest of whole provinces as large as England ten times told!

I shall make the announcement of a fact, or rather a hypothesis—scarcely well known, though strange enough. It may interest, if not surprise, the ethnologist. I assert then, that had the four tribes of North Mexican Indians—Comanche, Lipano, Apaché, and Navajo—been left to themselves, *in less than another century they would have driven the degenerate descendants of the conquerors of Cortez from the soil of Anahuac!* I make this assertion with a full belief and clear conviction of its truthfulness. The hypothesis rests upon a basis of realities. It would require but very simple logic to prove it; but a few facts may yield illustration.

With the fall of Spanish rule in Mexico, ended the predominance of the Spaniard over the Indian. By revolution, the presidios became shorn of their strength, and no longer offered a barrier even to the weakest incursion. In fact, a neutral line no more exists; whole provinces—Sonora, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Cinaloa, and Leon—are no better than neutral ground, or, to speak more definitely, form an extended territory conquered and desolated by the Indians. Even beyond these, into the 'provincias internas,' have the bold copper-coloured freebooters of late carried their forays—even to the very gates of Durango. Two hundred Comanche warriors, or as many Apachés, fear not to ride hundreds of miles into the heart of civilised Mexico—hesitate not to attack a city or a settlement—scruple not to drag from hearth and home lovely maids and tender children—*only* these—and carry them slave and captive to their wild fastnesses in the desert! And this is no occasional foray, no long gathering outburst of revenge or retaliation; but an *annual* expedition, forming part of the regular routine of the year, and occurring at the season when the buffalo have migrated to the north—occurring in that month in the calendar of these aboriginal brigands jocosely styled the 'Mexican moon!'

Upon whose head falls the blow thus periodically repeated? Upon the poor and unprotected? No doubt you will fancy so.

A single fact may serve to undeceive you. Only a few years ago, Trias, a man of 'first family' in Mexico, and governor of the state of Chihuahua, lost one of his sons by an Indian foray. The boy was taken prisoner by the Comanches; and it was only after years of negotiation and payment of a large sum, that the father recovered his child. Thus the governor of a province, with means and military at his command, was not powerful enough to cause the surrender of his captive son: he was forced to *buy* him!

It is computed that at this moment there are 3000 white captives in the hands of the North Mexican Indians—nearly all of them of Spanish descent. They are mostly females, and live as the slave-wives of their captors—if such connection may be dignified by the name. There are white men, too, among the Indians—prisoners taken in their youth; and strange as it may appear, few of them—either of the men or women—evince any desire to return to their former life or homes. Some, when ransomed, have refused the boon. Not uncommon along the frontier has been witnessed that heart-rending scene—a father who had recovered his child from the savages, and yet unable to reclaim its affection, or even to arouse it to a recognition of its parentage. In a few years—sometimes only months—the captives forget their early ties, and become wedded to their new life—become *Indianized*.

But a short time before, an instance had come under our own observation. The wounded brave taken in the skirmish at the mound was a full-blooded Mexican—had been carried off by the Comanches, some years before, from the settlements on the Lower Rio Grande. In consideration of this, we gave him his liberty, under the impression that he would gladly avail himself of the opportunity to return to his kindred.

He proved wanting in gratitude as in natural affection. The same night on which he was set free, he took the route back to the prairies, mounted upon one of the best horses of our troop, which he had stolen from its unfortunate owner!

Such are the 'Cosas de Mexico'—a few of the traits of frontier-life on the Rio Bravo del Norté.

But what of the war-trail? That is not yet explained.

Know, then, that from the country of the Indians to that of the Mexicans extend many great paths, running for hundreds of miles from point to point. They follow the courses of streams, or cross vast desert plains, where water is found only at long intervals of distance. They are marked by the tracks of mules, horses, and captives. Here and there, they are whitened by bones—the bones of men, of women, of animals, that have perished by the way. Strange paths are these! What are they, and who has made them? Who travel by these roads that lead through the wild and homeless desert?

Indians: they are the paths of the Comanche and Caygüa—the roads made by their warriors during the 'Mexican moon.'

It was upon one of these that the trapper was gazing when he gave out the emphatic utterance:

'War-trail, by the Eturnal!'

CHAPTER LXXVI.

ON THE WAR-TRAIL.

Scarcely staying to quench my thirst, I led my horse across the stream, and commenced scrutinising the trail upon the opposite bank. The faithful trackers were by my side—no fear of them lagging behind.

I had won the hearts of both these men; and that they would have risked life to serve me, I could no longer doubt, since over and over again they *had* risked it. For Garey, strong, courageous, handsome in the true sense, and noble-hearted, I felt real friendship, which the young trapper reciprocated. For his older comrade, the feeling I had was like himself—indefinable, indescribable. It was strongly tinctured with admiration, but admiration of the intellectual rather than the moral or personal qualities of the man.

Instead of intellectual, I should rather say instinctive, for his keen intuitive thoughts appeared more like instincts than the results of a process of ratiocination.

That the old trapper admired me—in his own phraseology, 'liked me mightily'—I was aware. He was equally zealous as the younger in my service; but too free an exhibition of zeal was in his eyes a weakness, and he endeavoured to conceal it. His admiration of myself was perhaps owing to the fact that I neither attempted to thwart him in his humours nor rival him in his peculiar knowledge—the craft of the prairie. In this I was but his pupil, and behaved as such, generally deferring to his judgment.

Another impulse acted upon the trackers—sheer love of the part they were now playing. Just as the hound loves the trail, so did they; and hunger, thirst, weariness, one or all must be felt to an extreme degree before they would voluntarily forsake it.

Scarcely staying, therefore, to quench their thirst, they followed me out of the water; and all three of us together bent our attention to the sign.

It was a *war-trail*—a true war-trail. There was not the track of a dog—not the drag of a lodge-pole upon it. Had it been a moving encampment of peaceable Indians, these signs would have been visible; moreover, there would have been seen numerous footsteps of Indian women—of squaws; for the slave-wife of the lordly Comanche is compelled to traverse the prairies *à pied*, loaded like the packhorse that follows at her heels!

But though no foot-prints of Indian women appeared, there *were* tracks of women, scores of them, plainly imprinted in the soil of the river-bank. Those slender impressions, scarcely a span in length, smoothly moulded in the mud, were not to be mistaken for the footsteps of an Indian squaw. There was not the wide divergence at the heels—the toes turned inward; neither was there the moccasin-print. No; those tiny tracks must have been made by women of that nation who possess the smallest and prettiest feet in the world—by women of Mexico.

'Captives!' we exclaimed, as soon as our eyes rested upon the tracks.

'Ay, poor critters!' said Rube sympathisingly; 'the cussed niggurs hev made 'em fut it, while thur's been spare hosses a plenty. Wagh! a good wheen o' weemen thur's been—a score on 'em at the least. Wagh! I pity 'em, poor gurls! in sech kumpny as they've got into. It ur a life they've got to lead. Wagh!'

Rube did not reflect how heavily his words were falling upon my heart.

There were the tracks of more than a hundred horses, and as many mules. Some of both were iron-shod; but for all that, we knew they had been either ridden or driven by Indians: they, too, were captives.

The sign helped my companions to much knowledge that would have been unintelligible to me. It was certainly the path of a war-party of Indians *on the back track*. They were laden with plunder, and driving before them, or forcing to follow, a crowd of captives—horses, mules, and women—children, too, for we saw the tiny foot-marks of tender age. The trail was significant of all this—even to me.

But my comrades saw more; they no longer doubted that the Indians were Comanches—a moccasin had been picked up, a castaway—and the leathern tassel attached to the heel declared the tribe to which its wearer belonged to be the Comanche.

The trail was quite fresh; that is, but a few hours had intervened since the Indians passed along it. Notwithstanding the dryness of the atmosphere, the mud on the river-edge had not yet become 'skinned,' as the trappers expressed it. The Indians had forded the stream about the time the prairie was set on fire.

The horses we had been following across the burnt plain were those of a party who had gone out in pursuit of the steed. Just at the ford, they had overtaken the main body, who carried along the spoil and captives. From that point, all had advanced together.

Had they done so? This was our first object of inquiry. It was almost too probable to admit of a doubt; but we desired to be certain about a matter of such primary importance, and we looked for the hoof with the piece chipped from its edge—easily to be identified by all of us. In the muddy margin of the stream we could not find it; but the steed may have been led or ridden in front of the rest, and his tracks trampled out by the thick drove that followed.

At this moment, Stanfield came up and joined us in the examination. The ranger had scarcely bent his eyes on the trail, when a significant exclamation escaped him. He stood pointing downward to the track of a shod horse.

'My horse!' cried he; 'my horse Hickory, by Gosh!'

'Your horse?'

'May I never see Kaintuck if it ain't.'

'Yur sure o' it, ole hoss? yur sure it's yurn?'

'Sure as shootin; I shod him myself. I kid tell that ere track on a dry sand-bar. I know every nail thar; I druv 'em wi' my own hand—it's him sartin.'

'Wheeo-o!' whistled Rube in his significant way, 'thet makes things a leetle plainer, I reck'n; an so I thort all along—an so I thort—ye-es—so I thort. The durned rennygade niggur!' he added with angry emphasis, 'I know'd we dud wrong to let 'im go; we oughter served 'im as I perposed; we oughter cut his durnation throat, an scalped 'im the minnut we tuk 'im: cuss the luck thet we didn't! Wagh!'

Rube's words needed no interpretation. We knew whose throat he would have cut—that of the Indianised Mexican taken at the mesa; and I remembered that at the time of his capture such had been Rube's advice, overruled, of course, by the more merciful of his comrades. The trapper had assigned some reason: he knew something of the man's history.

He now repeated his reasons:

'He ur a true rennygade,' said he; 'an thur ain't on all the parairas a wusser enemy to whites than thet ur—more partiklurly to Texan whites. He wur at the massacree o' Wilson's family on the clur fork o' the Brazos, an wur conspik'us in the skrimmige: a' more too—it ur thort he toated off one o' Wilson's gurls, an made a squaw o' her, for he's mighty given thet way I've heern. Wagh! he ur wuss than a Injun, for the reezun thet he unerstans the ways o' the whites. I never know'd sich a foolich thing as ter let 'im git clur. 'Ee may thank yur luck, Mister Stannafeel, thet he didn't take yur har at the same time when he wur atakin o' yur hoss. Wagh! thet ye may!'

It was Stanfield's horse that had been stolen by the renegade, and the tracks now identified by the ranger were those of that animal—no doubt with the freebooter upon his back.

This new discovery let in a flood of light. Beyond a doubt, the war-party was the same we had met by the mound, with perhaps a reinforcement; the same that had just plundered the Mexican town; the same who had paid their hurried visit to the hacienda, and this renegade——

Ha! Strange remembrances were crowding into my brain. I remembered meeting this semi-savage skulking about the road, after we had granted him his parole; I remembered, upon one occasion, seeing him while riding out with *her;* I remembered the rude expression with which he had regarded my companion —the glance half-fierce half-lustful; I remembered that it made me angry; that I rebuked and threatened him—I now remembered all.

Wild thoughts came rushing into my mind—worse thoughts than ever.

I sprang to my saddle, and, calling out some half-coherent orders, rode rapidly along the trail.

TRAWLING AND DREDGING.

'SHALL we go or not? Oh, I *hope* the weather is all right!' was my first thought, as I sprang from my bed one day last summer, and hastened to the window to ascertain the state of the wind and the aspect of the heavens. I had formed an engagement for trawling and dredging, both new amusements to me, and both giving promise of great enjoyment; but as I looked out on the moveless shrubs, and saw that a soft rain was descending, my heart sank within me; I knew that without wind we could not go; and not a breath of wind could I detect. However, being of a somewhat hopeful character, and knowing that a breeze *might* come, I 'took heart of grace,' donned my sea-clothes, and made ready. Presently, a rustling amongst the laurels made me prick up my ears with joy, and, taking a glance around me, I soon descried most hopeful symptoms. The rain had ceased, and the sun had begun to struggle out, bringing with it what soon became a most undeniable breeze; and so, gathering together my gear, I set out with heart elate on my expedition.

For the benefit of those who may be as much in the dark on such subjects as I was myself some little time since, I will describe the implements of our toil, and the mode of using them.

The *trawl*—a word I find in no dictionary, though old Bailey, that prince of lexicographers, gives: 'To trowl, to move or wander about'—is a huge net framed of very strong twine, with meshes about an inch and a half in length. The edge of this net is run on a cord, so that it may be drawn up into a bag, and one side of it is attached to a stout bar of wood about twenty feet long, with iron grapples at each end, by which it is hitched on to the side of the vessel. To this bar are fastened as many fathoms of stout rope, about an inch in diameter, as are sufficient to reach the bottom of the waters which the trawl is meant to search; and the bag is heavily leaded, so as to descend to the bottom.

When the trawl is required to be used, two men loosen its fastenings, and drop it over the side of the boat into the sea, uncoiling sufficient cable to follow it to its depths. The boat then sails on, dragging the net through the waters for as long a time as it is thought necessary. For naturalists' purposes, this is not more than from ten to twenty minutes; but the professional trawlers, whose prize is fish, often keep it down five or six hours. When the net is drawn, the boat is turned so as to sail over the line of rope, on which two men pull lustily, while a third coils the cable as they free it, until the net appears just below the surface of the water. This is an exciting moment: but of it hereafter.

The *dredge* is a bag of very thick netting, so close in its meshes, that scarcely the smallest shell can go through them. This is strongly fastened to an oblong frame of iron about thirty inches long by fifteen or eighteen wide, more or less, the edges of which are sharpened so as to scratch the rocks, &c., at the bottom as it is dragged along. The dredge is attached to cords in the same manner as the trawl, and is thrown over and managed much in the same way; but, being a lighter instrument, only one man is required to work it. Sometimes the dredge brings up nothing but sand and mud; at others, plenty of animals *of sorts;* and now and then matters that have been dropped from some ship or boat are thus fished up—as, for instance, my friend told me he had the night before dredged up several fathoms of good new rope, exactly what he had been going to buy for use, and which was at the moment he spoke doing duty on the dredge.

An excellent concomitant to the dredge is a square box, with a bottom of fine fly-wire, into which another, with coarser wire-net for its bottom, fits. When your dredge comes up laden with sand and mud, or the contents are otherwise dirty, put them by instalments into this box, and make one of your sailors hold it overboard in the water until all the sand and mud is washed away. You will then find the larger articles clean and clear in the upper box, whilst the minute shells and other things will have sifted through, and be equally clean and nice in the lower box. This is a capital contrivance, and greatly facilitates the work.

These implements, together with plenty of wide-mouthed pickle-bottles, glass jars, tin cans, &c., for receiving and separating the contents of the trawl or dredge as you receive them, are all that are requisite for the double purpose of trawling and dredging.

My impatience had made me reach the rendezvous on the quay long before the rest of the party; but I was not weary of waiting, for the scene was more than pleasant. The sea was all sparkle and beauty, the sky of unbroken azure; the finely wooded grounds of Tor Abbey lay on my left. Opposite to me was the pretty Strand, as the row of shops facing the sea at Torquay is called, with all its bustle of carriages, and pretty stands of red, and blue, and yellow donkey-chairs and flies, far enough off not to disturb me with its bustle, but near enough to amuse me by its liveliness; and between me and it was the basin, now full of water, and covered with vessels of different kinds. Just below, at the foot of the steps, lay the beautiful little yacht, the *Ribble*, preparing to sail, with her smart crew all alive, and all her elegant equipments contrasting strongly with the heavy coal-schooner which was just easing herself off from her moorings, also preparing to sail the moment the way was clear.

It took but few minutes for the white sails of the *Ribble* to fill, and bear her out with a spring into the bay towards Paignton. Then a sharp tack, and she dashed past us, cutting her way back with a velocity that was almost inconceivable across the bay towards the *Nose*, and was gone!

Meanwhile, the heavy collier had spread her dark gray patched sails and begun to clear out. She moved off heavily, but sailing steadily with a grave dignity and grace quite unlike the active movements of the little yacht, yet very beautiful. She also took the course towards Paignton, then tacked, crossed our course, and again recrossed us—for by this time our party had assembled, and the little *Mystery* was on her way to the dredging-ground—and then disappeared behind Berry Head.

And now over went the trawl; and after arranging all our pots and pans, and dipping up a supply of fresh sea-water, so that everything might be ready against the net coming up, we beguiled the time by watching the shifting lights on the shore, the birds on the water, or in the air above it, and the fleecy white clouds which just flecked the blue of the sky, and were mirrored in that of the sea—until notice was given to haul up.

'Look out for *Nudibranchs*,' said my companion, a scientific friend, who had kindly taken the guidance of our work; 'you will often find them sticking to the meshes of the net.' Now, it so happened that Nudibranchs—the naked-gilled mollusks which have their breathing-apparatus outside in the likeness of plumes of feathers—happened to be at present the objects of special interest to me, so that this announcement set me more on the alert than the cry of 'Whales ahead!' would a whaler: and not in vain. We picked off more than a dozen specimens of that beautiful little animal, *Polycera quadrilineata*, which, as they were handed to me, looked like little lumps of yellow jelly as big as a pea; but as I dropped them at once into a glass jar of clear water, their true form and colouring were displayed. This Polycera—I beg pardon for hard words, but it has no common name—is a little slug-like animal; that is, its *foot* is formed like that of slugs, and on it it creeps; but this foot is pure white, narrow, and long, tapering to a point behind. The body, of which the foot forms the lower part, rises in the middle, and sends out from an aperture in the back seven or nine pinnate, tapering plumes, 'richly dight with gold and white.' On each side of this bunch of feathers—which are, in fact, the gills or branchial tubes of the animal—is a single stout-pointed lobe, of white, tipped with chrome-yellow. The back is spotted and striped with the same rich colouring, and sometimes with black also. It has a pair of laminated tentacles, of bright yellow, rising from the top of the head, and bending backwards; and the frontal veil is extended into four elongated, pointed filaments of the same golden hue, which are ever in motion, and seem as if they acted as feelers. These pretty creatures swim on the surface of the water, foot upwards, or creep gracefully on the coral weeds in your tank, looking most elegant. But I am forestalling. As the trawl rose to view below the water, and before we could get it up, we were amused by the splash and dash of dozens of small flat fish, dabs and flounders, and amongst them that ugly fellow John Dory—of whom tradition hints that he was once the affianced of *Ann Chovy*, whose delicate flesh—albeit a mere flake of it exists on each side his body—used to tempt the old fish-epicure Quin to visit the coast every year for the purpose of eating John in his perfection. These were the prey of the boys of our party, who were very busy gathering them up. Then there were plenty of the violet cross-fish (*Uraster violacea*) and of the common cross-fish (*U. rubens*), and of other things more than there is time to record; and then over went the trawl again, and we tacked, and sailed back across the bay towards our dredging-ground off Anstey's Cove, dragging the trawl after us.

Whether it was the extreme speed with which we ran along, that kept the apparatus from reaching the bottom, I do not know; but it is probable it was so. Whatever might be the cause, the result was certain, for when we again hauled, we found not a thing worth having in our trawl. But we were now amongst the beautiful island-rocks which adorn the entrance of Torbay, and between them and the shore beyond Hope's Nose, lay our ground. This we prepared to search by fastening the trawl alongside, and throwing out the dredge.

'Does it jump?' asked the director of the sports of the man who held the rope. Now, jumping is the sign of being on good rocky ground, so we were glad to hear the answer: 'Capital, sir—goes along capital—can't be better;' and in five minutes or so, up came the bag with heaps of goods in it—goods enough to engage our attention for hours, if we had been free to give it. There were long tubes, six or eight inches in length, and about one-sixth of an inch in diameter, some straight as an arrow, others curled and twisted—the homes of that beautiful crested worm the *Serpula vermicularis*. In some of them the animals lay *perdu*, only waiting to be left a little while quietly in a glass of clean water, to expand their scarlet funnel-shaped tubes of branchiæ round the mouth of their cells.[*] Others were empty—the forsaken homes of the dead. There were some coiled on stones, and only partially rising free; and there was another species of a smaller kind, with pure white tubular cases, multitudes of them twisted, and wreathed, and knotted together like Gordian-knots of small cords, in strange contortions, heads and tails all mixed together. These are very properly named *Serpula contortuplicata*. A number of pretty little semi-transparent prawns and shrimps of different kinds were in this haul, some tinged with red, some with green, and all with delicate fan-shaped tails expanded, and beautiful shining eyes on stalks. The stones and shells to which these serpulæ adhered were richly clothed with forests of elegant coral-weeds, which I cannot better describe than by quoting Kingsley's account of the garb of Maia Squinado, Esq. It is a spider-crab, of which he says:

'His whole back is covered with a little gray forest of branching hairs as fine as the spider's web, each branchlet carrying its little pearly ringed club, each club its rose-crowned polype, like—to quote Mr Gosse's comparison—the unexpanded buds of the acacia. On that leg grows, amidst another copse of the gray polypes, a delicate straw-coloured sertularia branch on branch of tiny double combs, each tooth of the comb being a tube containing a living flower; on another leg another sertularia, coarser, but still beautiful; and round it again has trained itself, plant upon plant of *glass ivy*, bearing crystal bells, each of which, too, protrudes its living flower; on another leg is a fresh species, like a little heather-bell of whitest ivory, and every needle-leaf a polype-cell. Let us stop before the imagination grows dizzy with the contemplation of those myriads of beautiful atomies. And what is their use? Each living flower, each polype mouth is feeding fast, sweeping into itself, by the perpetual currents caused by the delicate fringes upon its rays—so minute these last, that their motion only betrays their presence—each tiniest atom of decaying matter in the surrounding water, to convert it, by some wondrous alchemy, into fresh cells and buds, and either build up a fresh branch in their thousand-tenanted tree, or form an egg-cell, from whence, when ripe, may issue, not a fixed zoophyte, but a free swimming animal.' Such fairy gardens as above described covered almost everything we drew from the waves. There were crabs decked with plumes of sertulariæ, shells living and dead coated with shrubberies of pure white; laomedeæ of various kinds, all with each cell full of life, which as I dropped the shells one by one into pure clear water, and set the vessel where the sunbeams played on it, sent out their crystal stars of different forms in myriads—a glittering galaxy. Between these shrubs, the ground was incrusted with little mounds, and smooth-spread lawns, of a sort of cellular crust, from which issued elegant little bell-shaped flowers, some red, some white, some yellow, but always the same hue as the crust, composed of twenty or more shining filaments, each separate, but all rising together equal in length, and curving exactly to the same line of grace, so that the whole when expanded formed vase-shaped flowers, which stood as thick as blades of grass on the ground. There were different sorts of lepralia. In some cases, great masses of this stony coating were grouped round a stem of sea-weed in lumps as thick as the finger, and the living bells stood out on all sides like the florets on a spike of veronica.

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[*] See *Chambers's Journal*, No. 79, p. 12.

But whilst I had been busy with my fairy shrubberies, the dredge had been at work amidst the rocks beneath us, and now up it came. Hey! what *have* we here? Writhing, twisting, tossing, up comes a mass of supple worm-like arms, all wreathed together in what appears to be inextricable confusion, and all combining a thousand different tints. But the confusion is *not* inextricable. Let them alone, and give them space, and one after another out walks hundreds of what Gosse's sailor calls 'them 'ere Ophiocomas.' We have taken *hundreds* of brittle stars (*Ophiocoma rosula*), no two alike, and each and all glowing with such hues as would equal the ribbon-beds of flowers at Sydenham. Each long-legged fellow boasts at least three colours, and most combine several more. There is the richest purple, striped with rose; yellow, mottled with scarlet, purple, and black ornaments; rich crimson picked out with white, and touched up with blue; deep blue, touched up with white and scarlet; scarlet, dashed with purple and orange. No butterflies' wings, no gaudy birds of eastern skies, ever could present you with more exquisitely brilliant combinations of hues, or with more delicate pencilling in their intermixture.

And now I take some of the finest, and drop them into my can; and gathering up the rest, we restore them to their own native world of waters, highly amused to watch their starry forms as they sink; and whilst the dredge goes down to seek for other prey, I will describe the wondrous structure of this gorgeous creature, as my lens displays it to me. In the centre is a somewhat pentagonal disk, with a circle of colour in the middle, from which branch five wide and five narrow rays, dividing it into ten parts; these, as also the central circles, are close set with spines. The spaces between are usually white, and the skin which covers them hangs loose, and alternately rises and falls with a most graceful swell, apparently from the breathing of the animal. From this disk spring five long spinous arms, each about five times as long as the diameter of the disk. These arms or rays have a line of rich colour running up them, perhaps bright yellow, or crimson, or scarlet, the ground colour being green or white, bordered with pink, blue, or some other colour. The rays are jointed, covered thick with bristling spines, between which are placed rows of suckers, which form the animal's means of progression. The movements of these creatures are well described by Mr Gosse. He speaks of them as 'deliberately crawling about by means of their five long flexible arms in a manner that seems a ludicrous caricature of a man climbing up by his hands and feet, only you must suppose an additional arm growing from the top of his head.' They look, however, very lovely as they glide about with their eccentric movements amidst the stones in your aquarium; but they are poor possessions, for they throw off first one leg, and then another, until but a button-like disk is left; or they curl themselves up, and die, before you can have kept them many days.

I had been so very busy looking at and managing my brittle stars, that I had seen nothing else of what the haul had produced, and the dredge was thrown over again, when my companion held towards me a glass bottle, and said: 'You know the pecten, do you not?' As he spoke, an animal in the bottle, which was contained in a bivalve shell about an inch in diameter, sprang up, and danced a regular *pas seul* in the water to his own music, for he dashed from the bottom to the top of the bottle by means of three rapid diagonal movements, in which, at each dash, he struck against the side of the vessel, and made it ring, and then descended in the same vehement manner, and, after a moment, repeated the same manœuvres two or three times in succession. I begged that he might be transferred to my jar, and two or three more were soon added to the party, all of whom danced about in my vases at home with such a clatter, as to quite startle me. Their activity, however, soon ceased, and, after a few days, their lives; but they were, whilst they lasted, amongst the most beautiful and interesting of my possessions.

Few people who have not kept and watched living specimens, have any idea of the beauty of the animal of the great scallop-shells that are sold in the markets for food. Between that pair of shells lies a creature which, for delicacy of structure and beauty of colouring, cannot be excelled in nature or art. As the lips open, you first see that there is a white pellucid fringe of tentacles round the inner edge of each, which wave about in the water. Some are long, and some short; but the longest is about the length of half of the diameter of the shell. The valves open a little wider, and you see that a row of brilliant diamond spots alternate with each of the larger tentacles on each edge of the shell. They are formed of a ring of diamond light, with a centre of gem-like hue, which in some aspects is green, and in others blue, but always of metallic lustre. These rows of eyes look like a double row of jewels; they are supposed to be eyes, but whether they really act as such, is doubtful. But the valves open more and more; filling up the space between the shells, and putting one much in mind of the pincushions which we have so often seen made with scallop-shells for covers, you see a soft, fleshy, and flesh-coloured veil, richly marked, and pencilled with chestnut-brown, its edge fringed with the delicate rows of white tentacles which I have described, and which, although they at first seem to spring from the edge of the shell, are in reality appendages of this organ, which is called *the mantle*. Leave the pretty creature quite in peace, and do not touch the jar so as to startle it, and you will presently see it gape more and more, the mantle open, and a lovely sight display itself. Within the shelter of the mantle are spread two filmy snow-white *sheets*, beautifully crinkled like the most delicate muslin paper, goffered in a mould fine enough for ornamenting the garb of a fairy; and snug between these dainty sheets rests the body of the little creature, for whose comfort, safety, and adornment the Creator has supplied such a wonderful and exquisite amount of workmanship. This little body completes the richness of colouring and beauty of the painted scallop (*Pecten opercularis*) most perfectly, for it is a smooth oblong lobe, like a bean, and of the most intense orange colour, which contrasts with the very pure white of the veil in a beautiful manner. The leaping, or, as I have termed it, dancing of this creature, is accomplished thus: as it lies on the ground with its valves open, it thrusts out a delicate white fleshy foot, and pressing this on the substance below it, opens the valves of the shell, and springs upwards. Gosse conceives this action to be performed by the animal's drawing in water, and forcibly expelling it again; by means of which contrivance it forms a pressure against the side of the water, and springs in the opposite direction—an idea that affords a satisfactory solution to the question which has often been discussed, of how the leaping shell-fish effect their movement.

The next haul of our dredge brought us more brittle stars, sand-stars, &c., and also more forests of sertulariæ, plumulariæ, laomedeæ, &c., and to me a great treasure in the shape of a huge nudibranch an inch and a half long, and of extreme beauty. It was of a pale dove-colour throughout, each side of the back being furnished with five feathery plumes, partially retractile; and as it moved about on its slug-like foot, or floated on the surface of the water by means of hollowing in this foot, so as to make it act as a boat, these plumes were ever in motion, waving about, twitching themselves hither and thither, and contracting and expanding at will in the most graceful manner. The back of this animal (*Tritonia Hombergii*) is covered with large soft tubercles, its *veil*—as a prolongation of the body in front is termed—formed two large scallop-shaped lobes fringed at the edge, it had two massive tentacles like horns on its head, which rose from a sort of cup, and divided into bunches of branched filaments very lovely to behold. I kept it alive several days, and then, as my compact with my companion had been that I should have it in life, and he in death, I sent its body after it had died to him, that he might 'boil it down' and obtain microscopic objects from its débris. He found it to contain a most wonderful palate, furnished with such teeth as he had never before seen in any nudibranch; but what else it bestowed on him, I have not yet heard.

Another tiny young specimen of the same animal I found creeping about on the coral weeds, when I got home; and a most beautiful little creature, *Doto coronata*, also a nudibranch, crept out from the weeds, and charmed me by its graceful movements and elegance of form, as well as the novelty of its structure. Its green thread-like tentacles, two in number, and rising from the top of the head out of trumpet-like sheaths, were in constant wavy motion; along each side of its back were bunches of branchiæ, consisting of oval lobes seated on stalks, the substance semi-transparent, and set with circles of opaque tubercles round it, with a single one covering the apex. Its delicate white foot, covered with this curious body, looked very pretty as it crept about on the side of the glass, or floated at will, foot upwards, on the water. After I had kept Doto a few days, it laid a most elegant zigzag ribbon of pure white spawn on the side of the glass, and though dull and sluggish for a day before and after this operation, it is now in full life and vigour, although it has been some weeks in captivity. A curious thing in the structure of this and of most nudibranchs is, that you can see the pulsation of the heart with the naked eye, in a most interesting manner.

There was another most lovely object that came up almost every haul in large quantities; this was the 'dead-man's fingers' (*Alcyonium digitatum*). When this first comes out of the water, it exhibits the appearance of flesh-coloured smooth lobes, of unequal sizes, some as large as a clenched hand, others not bigger than a pea; the surface is marked with small pellucid stars. Put the mass you select in water, and watch it for a few hours, and you will see that it swells to double its former size, and becomes semi-transparent and of pure white, and that each of these starry marks begins to rise, and by degrees elongates itself into a pure white glassy flower; so that the whole surface of the substance is closely studded with tubular blossoms of most exquisite symmetry and beauty, each being about a quarter of an inch in height, and formed like the blossom of a lily. These all remain in full expansion, not retreating when touched, till the whole fades away together. Mr Gosse, in his *Naturalist's Rambles on the Coast of Devon*, gives a beautiful account of this mass of blooming jelly, and an elegant drawing of one of its polype heads.

It belongs to the family *Alcyonidæ*, from *alcyon*, a word which signifies 'sea-foam;' and truly, when this alcyonium lies thrown up on the shore after a heavy storm, it looks so like the flakes of foam which have been drifted about amongst the débris of the red conglomerate cliffs, until they have attained a red tinge, that I have sometimes mistaken the one for the other, and grasped at the yielding foam, in mistake for the solid alcyonium. It is dredged on rocks, stones, shells, or any other substance that has lain at the bottom of the sea for some time.

But alas, alas! long before we need have left our rich dredging-ground, the fatigue and excitement told on my not very strong frame, and to my great sorrow, I was obliged to 'cry craven,' and ask for a ticket of dismissal. Homeward, therefore, we sailed; but ere we reached the Saddle Rock, the fresh sailing motion, a little rest, and a glass of wine, had so much recruited me, that my companions' suggestion of one more cast met with glad acceptance, and over went the dredge, and came back to us with a fine heap of sea-hares* (*Aphysia depilans*), and a few other matters, but nothing of much interest. I found some strange little white sea-leeches sticking to the side of my glasses by one end, the other being either stretched out straight into the water like a looper caterpillar, or else attached by its round sucker-aperture to a neighbouring part of the glass, so as to form a loop. Where we took these, I know not, as they, like the little Doto, crept out from the can as we went onwards; but I found one of them a day or two after acting the doctor, and phlebotomising a poor little saxicava rugosa, on whose body he had fixed, and on whose blood, or representative of that fluid, he was feasting—the consequence of which was, that my poor little stone-borer died next day.

It was now getting dusk, and we therefore sailed at once into harbour and made our way homewards, richly laden with booty, and well pleased with our day's excursion.

AT EVEN-TIDE.

WHAT spirit is 't that does pervade
The silence of this empty room?
And as I lift my eyes, what shade
Glides off, and vanishes in gloom?

I could believe, this moment past,
A known form filled that vacant chair,
That, here, kind looks were on me cast
I never shall see anywhere!

The living are so far away!
But *thou*—thou seemest strangely near:
Know'st all my silent heart would say,
Its peace, its pains, its hope, its fear.

And from thy calm supernal height,
And wondrous wisdom newly won,
Smilest on all our poor delight
And petty wo beneath the sun.

From all this coil thou hast slipped away
As softly as the cloud departs
Along the hillside purple-gray—
Into the heaven of patient hearts:

Nothing here suffered, nothing missed
Will ever stir from its repose
The death-smile on her lips unkissed,
Who all things loves and all things knows.

And I who, ignorant and weak,
Helpless in love and quick in pain,
Do evermore still restless, seek
The unattainable in vain—

Find it strange comfort thus to sit
While the loud world unheeded rolls,
And clasp, ere yet the fancy flit,
A friend's hand from the Land of Souls.

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* See *Chambers's Journal*, No. 65, p. 195.

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THE ART PALACE AT MANCHESTER.

THE great, smoky, busy city of Manchester has at length done a thing which, for a time, must make it the most observed place in England. Its Art Treasures Exhibition is a spectacle such as the world has never before seen—never, indeed, has been in circumstances to produce till now. Imagine that, leaving the murky town behind, you come out westward into a country of wide-spreading green meadows, interspersed slightly with villages and groups of pleasant suburban residences: there, beside a railway, rises a large building of peculiar aspect, reminding you generally of the magical-looking Crystal Palace of Hyde Park, with a gay-coloured front in three lofty arches, where carriages are continually arriving and departing. This is the Art Treasures Exhibition of Manchester—a temporary palace, we may say, reared for the purpose which its name in some degree expresses. England, it has been declared on high authority, possesses not merely a great body of works of art, the product of its own genius, but the greater number of all the fine pictures that have been produced by foreign artists since the revival. To assemble these from the private and public galleries amongst which they are dispersed, in one great place, where you could at once see and study what it would otherwise take months to visit, and what practically it was impossible otherwise for any one to see, was the idea conceived by the originator of this singular spectacle, Mr J. C. Deane, and which the Merchant Princes of Manchester—wisely deeming it a worthy task—have worked out. The result is one which could only have been realised in a country or province of great wealth, and in a time of peace, prosperity, and general mutual amity and good feeling throughout the various sections of the community. As to the preparation of the house, there were 109 men of Manchester combining to guarantee the sum of L.72,500 for expenses—thirty-six of them undertaking L.1000 each! On the other hand, the object being the gratification and improvement of the People, the People of the whole country, there were nobles and men of wealth everywhere agreeing to take down the most treasured works of art from their walls, that they might be gathered together here; thereby undergoing, it must be admitted, some inconvenience, and even encountering the risk of great and irreparable loss. When we consider these circumstances, we must be prepared to own that even the outward splendours of the place scarcely come up to the moral considerations connected with it. One feels it to be symptomatic of a social suavity as connected with the onward march of industry, seeming to indicate that our community, diversified as it is in pursuits and conditions, is still at heart one—the English People.

The house may be described as consisting of one central arched hall, 632 feet long, by 104 broad, and 56½ in height, crossed near one end by a transept of 200 feet in length, being thus so far in the form of a great cathedral; the small part beyond the transept being occupied wholly as an orchestra. The spaces left by the cross form of the building are, however, filled up by side-saloons, corresponding to *aisles;* so that the entire area occupied is a strict parallelogram in figure. The arched ceilings of these various apartments have a space glazed for the admission of light. Entering at the east end, we have the fine vista of the central hall full before us, terminated in the remote distance by the ornamental front of a large organ. Rows of statues, of figures in ancient armour, and of glazed cases for articles of ornamental art, run along in double line; while the walls on both sides are clothed to a great height with pictures, being the portraits of the historical personages of England. In the side-saloon to the left are hung 1100 pictures by ancient masters. That on the right is filled with the choice productions of our own national school. In a suite of smaller apartments at the west end, are upwards of a thousand of the finest water-colour drawings by English masters, including more than fifty of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Turner. There is also a gallery around the transept and adjacent parts of the nave, containing an immense assemblage of engravings of all ages, besides numberless photographic miniatures. The general effect is gay, impressive, and beautiful.

Great was the excitement in Manchester when, on a gray day of May, with a cool east wind blowing, one who is in a sense 'the Prince of all the land' came to formally declare this magnificent exhibition open to the public. The streets, particularly those near the Art Palace, were full of the children of Labour, dirty but good-humoured, all eager to catch a glimpse of the royal visitor and the other distinguished persons concerned in the ceremony. Within the house were assembled perhaps 8000 ladies and gentlemen, nearly all of them holders of costly season-tickets, for such was the mode of selection adopted, in order that the crowd might be kept in moderation. Round a dais surmounted by a throne, in the centre of the transept, stood a row of ambassadors and English nobles, mingled with native gentlemen concerned in preparing the exhibition, several of whom wore court-dresses or the military uniform suitable to their character as deputy-lieutenants of the county. The scene was one of the utmost brilliancy and grace, chiefly by reason of the abundance of ladies, who were in general attired in a style of elegance which seems to be in some degree peculiar to rich mercantile communities. There was nothing remarkable in the ceremonies of the occasion. The Prince stood modestly up while listening to and replying to the various addresses brought before him by official persons. The Bishop of Manchester read an appropriate prayer; and the orchestra gave the Queen's Anthem and other airs with thrilling effect. Every outward demonstration sank beneath the sentiment of the affair—the consideration of what had brought all these people together, and what might be expected to result therefrom.

The study or enjoyment of the exhibition itself, we found to be a matter for many days, and still the treasure was left unexhausted. Somehow one finds that he cannot live upon pictures alone. After an hour spent in surveying some particular department, he is glad to come to the transept, and take a seat beneath the orchestra where Mr Halle is trying to regale another taste; or mayhap he lounges to the refreshment-room for the sake of a sandwich or a jelly wherewith to restore his flagging strength. Then he goes back again, catalogue in hand, to the pictures, pastures his senses upon them for another hour, and then requires another interval of relaxation. So a day passes, and at the end one is rather surprised to find how little it has accomplished in making himself acquainted with the innumerous articles submitted to his gaze. Perhaps the most rational course of procedure is to go to the ancient masters first, and there trace the art from its rude and simple beginnings in the fourteenth century down to its glorious perfection in the sixteenth. The subjects being for the most part expressive of the religious ideas of a form of Christianity out of which we have advanced, are apt to be of little or limited interest to us. But viewing the matter simply with a regard to the human faculties concerned in art, it is certainly curious to observe the progress made from the stiff, hard, irrelative figures of the times of Cimabue and Giotto, to the fine compositions and colouring of the days of Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci. And for this study, materials truly ample are here presented. Then come, in sections by themselves, groups of the works of Tintoretto, of Murillo, of Rubens, and his Flemish associates, shewing how art was affected by national peculiarities and tendencies. There chances to be an uncommonly large assemblage of Murillo's—no fewer than thirty-five—including his portrait of himself; and perhaps no special group in the exhibition is calculated to make a deeper impression. The feeling which this prince of the Spanish school imparts to his faces seems of unapproachable truthfulness. One looks with reverence on the earnest, genius-lighted face of him who could create such images of beauty, to be 'a joy for ever.' Of Raphael there are twenty-eight pieces, gathered out of nearly as many collections. Titian is represented by thirty works, amongst which will be found 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' a picture formerly belonging to the collection of Charles I. Rubens appears in great force. His famous 'Rainbow Landscape,' formerly in the Balbi Palace at Genoa, now in the collection of the Marquis of Hertford, is here; so also is his magnificently terrible 'Prometheus tortured by the Vultures.' His contributions are in all forty. Vandyck, Teniers, and Rembrandt are all brought before us in scarcely less abundant illustration. It would be endless to speak of particular works.

The paintings of modern British artists afford, of course, an opportunity of judging whether we have advanced, in this art, upon the continental men of the middle ages. In point of general worthiness of subject, there can be no doubt of an improvement; and if the opinion of an individual were of any account, we should be inclined to say that, overlooking a few gems of the past, the workmanship has advanced also. However this may be, we have here a series of large saloons filled with the very choicest pictures produced amongst us since the beginning of the last century. The choiceness is verified by one circumstance of which many may judge—namely, that so many are pictures from which we remember having seen engravings. The connoisseur has another proof of the fact, in recognising so many that have been the works of mark in the successive National Academy exhibitions of the last few years. It is evident, from the crowdedness of the rooms, that this is the favourite part of the show, so far as paintings are concerned. To come to particular masters—there are several of the prime works of Hogarth, including those singular comicalities, 'The March of the Guards to Finchley,' and 'the Southwark Fair.' There are many portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and a few of his miscellaneous pieces. Gainsborough, Romney, Opie, and West, give numerous specimens of the age of the Third George; while Lawrence, Stothard, Constable, Collins, and many other artists of the ensuing reign are not less abundantly represented. Of Wilkie we have here all the chief of those wonderful domestic pieces which have given him such celebrity—the 'Blind Man's Buff,' the 'Rent Day,' the 'Distraining for Rent,' &c.—besides several of his less happy, but still elaborate efforts in the historical line, and a portrait of his father and mother—the former in every respect the douce Scotch country parson; the latter, exactly the kind of person whom we might have expected to remark, as she is said to have done, when she heard her son David so much spoken of: 'I wiss they saw Andrew;' said Andrew being a good-looking young grocer. There are many works of Etty, of Landseer, of Leslie, of Danby, Maclise, Frith, Stanfield, Ward, and other men still or recently alive. That happy joke by Landseer, styled 'Alexander and Diogenes;' also his 'There is Life in the Old Dog yet'—a grand work—arrest universal attention. The pitying eye is drawn irresistibly by Ward's 'Charlotte Corday led to Execution.' Roberts is here with his magnificent interiors of cathedrals. George Harvey, Sir John Watson Gordon, Graham Gilbert, Faed, and others of the northern school, occupy the breadth that is due to their signal merits. Here, in especial, is Gordon's wonderful piece of life, 'the Provost of Peterhead,' the very essence of Scotch sagacity and humour. Here, too, is Gilbert's beautiful portrait of Sir John himself, in a court-dress; here, too, the exquisite 'Dr Wardlaw' of Macnee. To any one conversant with the works of modern artists, it is like a meeting with old friends—old friends, many of whom have been for years lost to sight, imprisoned in distant private galleries or otherwise; here miraculously, and past hope, brought together before our eyes again, all as pleasant to look on and converse with as ever. If so enjoyable in recognition to the simple public, how much more so must many of these pictures be to their authors! It is one of the sad conditions of a painter's life that the cherished work of his talents leaves him; and only too glad is he when it does so, never perhaps to be seen by him more. Imagine the feelings of an artist on coming hither, and finding several of his most favourite pieces, parted with perhaps twenty years ago, and not since beheld even once, or expected ever to be seen again. The accomplishment of such reunions seems to us one of the most agreeable circumstances resulting from the exhibition.

The department of British historical portraiture, occupying the principal part of the side-walls of the nave, forms in itself a peculiar and unique exhibition which it would have been well to form, even if alone. It commences with portraits of Richard II. and Henry IV., and goes on through the three succeeding centuries, bringing before us the principal royal and other personages who have figured in the more picturesque and romantic part of our history. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, with the chief men of their courts, are largely illustrated. So are the family and court of Charles I., whose portrait by Mytens, going out to hunting with his queen and the dwarf Hudson, is an especial gem. There is a copious series of the frail beauties of the subsequent reign, painted by Lely. The chief ministers, warriors, and men of thought of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries are here—and no small gratification it is to observe in them those particulars of complexion, colour of hair and eyes, which we look for in vain in the engravings of Houbraken and Lodge. In some instances, the portrait itself may be said to have a history. For example, that of Lord Falkland—the Falkland of Clarendon—full-length in a remarkably pale style, which, being in the possession of Horace Walpole, suggested to him the figure walking from the frame in his *Castle of Otranto*. As another instance, we have the identical picture of the Infanta of Spain which the Duke of Buckingham brought from Spain, to recommend her to the hand of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles I. Still another—one of the celebrated portraits of the Kit-cat Club, painted for Jacob Tonson the bookseller, has been contributed by Tonson's representative, Mr Baker. The catalogue of this part of the collection has been prepared by Mr Peter Cunningham, with large benefit from his peculiar knowledge of English biographical anecdote, many of the articles having notes appended, briefly but judiciously pointing out some interesting particular as to the subject, the artist, the circumstances under which the portrait was painted, or its subsequent history. Thus, with reference to Jonathan Richardson's portrait of Matthew Prior the poet, a letter of Prior to Swift, dated May 1720, is quoted: 'Richardson has made an excellent picture of me, from whence Harley (whose it is) has a stamp taken by Vertue.' This little sentence, it will be observed, brings before us at once the satisfaction of the poet with the portrait, and the fact of its being done for his friend and political associate, the Earl of Oxford. In some instances, men historically connected with each other, are curiously brought together on these walls. Boswell figures beside his Johnson; Lockhart succeeds Gifford, as he did in the *Quarterly Review*. Between a pleasing pair of heads, Prince Charles and his Clementina Walkingshaw, stands a small full-length of Rob Roy, represented with his broad-sword in his hand, and his target on his arm, as he might have appeared at Sheriffmuir. There is a melancholy interest in the fates of many of the historical personages here depicted; and it is curious to cast the eye along the wall and say: 'Here is Charles I.—beheaded: here is his friend, the first Duke of Hamilton—beheaded: here is the Marquis of Huntly, a prince in his own land, and a steadfast friend of King Charles—alas! also beheaded. There is the Earl of Derby—beheaded. There is the Duke of Buckingham—assassinated. Here stands Hampden—fell in battle. Here is Cromwell, whose fate it was, after being virtually monarch of England, to be dragged from the grave, and hung on a gallows!' Not less impressive is it to turn to the many of comparatively little worth—self-indulgent, perhaps profligate—who lived through all their days in unmerited ease, and came to gentle deaths at last. We may hope that, in the larger catalogue which is preparing, we shall have the means of drawing many a moral reflection from this part of the exhibition, not to speak of the historical knowledge which, when duly treated, it is fitted to impart.

The two rows of statues, which line the central avenue in the nave, as examples of the modern British school of sculpture, may perhaps be thought limited and deficient in variety; but they include several of the works which have made the greatest impression on the public. We need only mention Baily's 'Eve at the Fountain,' Calder Marshall's 'Ophelia,' Gibson's 'Narcissus,' Westmacott's 'Peri,' and Lawrence Macdonald's 'Bacchante,' to shew the nature of the collection. Their effect as objects in the general view of the nave is extremely fine.

There remains to be noticed a department of the exhibition which would require an article to itself—indeed a volume might be written about it—and yet we can give it only a few sentences. This is the Museum, as it may well be called, of ornamental art, occupying a double series of glazed cases behind the rows of statues. The beautiful crystal articles which were made at Venice in the sixteenth century, curiously decorated with internal lace-work or the most exquisite outward carving—the rich porcelain of Holland and France—the superb goldsmith-work of the middle ages—the numberless kinds of decorated utensils and furniture which used then to adorn great mansions—the arms and armour of the heroes of those days—are all here largely exemplified. One may spend hours over a single case of these valuables, many of which are unique. We must not name a single specimen, for it would be simple injustice to the rest; but we cannot pass from the subject without remarking the liberality of the directors with reference to this section. M. Soulages of Toulouse had devoted himself, some years ago, to the collecting of articles of ornamental art, chiefly in Italy, and he had been highly successful. Finding latterly the taste for such objects advancing, and their value increased, he offered his collection for sale. It was bought by a set of English gentlemen, who trusted that it might be finally taken off their hands by the English nation, with a view to the improvement of art in our country. Being disappointed in this hope, they were on the point of selling it off by auction, when the committee of the Art Treasures Exhibition came to the rescue, purchased the collection, and placed it here. For a time, then, the hammer of destiny is suspended: the Soulages collection may yet be kept together.

And now, good friends, you know something of this great affair which has sprung up at Manchester. Live you near or far, we recommend you to try to pay it a visit. It is literally 'such an opportunity as rarely occurs;' indeed, it never occurred before in the world's history, and no one can say how many years or generations may pass before it can occur again. Let, then, no light obstacles stay you. Go—go with your wives and children—take with you all over whom you have any influence, to see, to study, to profit by this wonderful assemblage of the works of fictile genius. You will infallibly return wiser and better men.

PEASANT-LIFE IN SYRIA.

The first dawn of day is ushered in by the cry of the goat's-milk vendors. 'Haleel il Gitchi' (milk of the goat) is the sure accompaniment to the clamour of early sparrows and equally noisy crows. We look out of the window, and see some half-dozen milch goats coming up the street, driven by a couple of village maidens, whose bare and dusty feet give indication of their having walked far before reaching the city-gate. If we had slept at their village last night—as we sometimes have done when travelling to and fro—we should have been awakened a good two hours before daybreak, by the bustle and noise in the household. In the first place, we had all slept under one roof, sometimes under one tent—the master and mistress; the sons and daughters; the stranger that chance may have thrown upon their hospitality; the old horse that carries produce to market, or fetches the weekly supply of fuel; the yoke of oxen the son drives before him in the plough; the long-bearded goats that supply milk enough for the household, in addition to yielding a very fair return from the nearest market; the hens that give profit and food by their eggs—all these, besides the poor old donkey and the invaluable dog and cat. The good man of the house is therefore at no great expense in building chambers and bedrooms, stabling or pens for cattle; and his haylofts and warehouses are arranged upon a like economic principle. The house, which consists of four mud-walls, is of an oblong shape, with one central door and two small windows on either side of it. At intervals there are niches in the wall, which half-an-hour's labour might convert into windows; but the peasant has built his house with an eye to warmth and comfort in the winter. What does he care about the heat or the fleas in summer—Ilhumel, illallah! He has a court-yard paved with hard manure, and nearly ten yards wide; here, if the weather be oppressive, the daughter sweeps all up at sunset, and spreads a few mats; which mats first serve as a supper-table; are then taken up and shaken in the street, and being replaced, the mattresses are spread upon them for the night, and so the house is left entirely to its dumb occupants.

But to return to the structure of the building. The length of the room may be twenty feet; its breadth, twelve; its height, on a level with the side-walls, four feet; but the two end-walls rise considerably higher, and terminating in a cone, support the principal beam of the sloping roof, which is a thatched one. A brilliant idea struck the ancestors of our peasant some forty generations gone by; and it has been handed down from father to son, and acted upon by them all. No one but a *miyinoon* (madman) would ever want to stand, or, at any rate, walk upright in his house; if he wants to do this, he can go out into the yard: he must be a tall man if that won't suit him. So argues our peasant; and as timber is cheap, he has laid several beams across from the side-walls, which, having planks laid loosely over them, with an aperture here and there, constitute an up-stairs loft, and are exceedingly beneficial during very heavy showers of rain, in keeping out some portion of the wet. Most houses in the East are not famous for their water-tight qualities. This loft is devoted to a great variety of useful purposes. Here is accumulated the winter-supply of fodder for the cattle; here also are warehoused onions, garlic, dried herbs, succulent roots, cheese, burghul,* figs, walnuts, dates, and other indispensable necessaries of the peasant's domestic economy; here, moreover—at least so it is whispered by his spiteful neighbour, 'Hadji Phistook,' the Salbund†—the peasant is more than half suspected of owning concealed treasure; nearly a dozen gold pieces, wrapped up in as many folds of rags, and carefully stowed away under the thatch-work. This rumour probably owes its origin to the fact of the peasant never suffering any one to ascend into the loft, unless accompanied by himself. Upon such occasions, an old ladder is set up with great ceremony, and verses from the Koran quoted aloud. Furthermore, the peasant has been detected up there after midnight, when all the rest of the family were supposed to be asleep. We are bound, however, to give full credit to his own explanation of his anxiety to keep intruders from the loft. None of the planks being nailed down, he is fearful that the women or children, by carelessly stepping on the ledge, might overbalance a plank, and entail destruction on a month's provisions—to say nothing of broken limbs, and so forth.

Well, we are supposed to have passed the night under such a roof. I would not compromise fact by saying that it has been a comfortable night for ourselves; not being accustomed to such strange bed-fellows, this could hardly be expected; but the peasant and his family have enjoyed invigorating and undisturbed rest, and so, after their own fashion, have the other occupants of the hut. It is somewhat past four A.M., and the cocks of the establishment, which with the hens, as is their wont, have roosted in the loft, smell the morning, and forthwith crow vehemently. This is the signal for the eldest daughter to bestir herself; when she wakens her mother and sisters; and these women begin in earnest to set about the business of the day. The men are permitted to sleep for an hour longer, and the children as long as they can; they are hungry and clamorous when they awake, and only impede the progress of work.

One girl devotes herself to the goats: first of all, the kids are allowed to suckle, more to encourage the flow of milk than for their own sustenance, for they have barely had a mouthful or two, before they are dragged away and penned up somewhere in the court-yard. Then two or three goats are fully milked for the immediate use of the household; these are separated from the remainder, and will go out to pasturage with the kids by and by. Meanwhile one has been gathering up the unoccupied mattresses, which she carries away and hides in a recess; another has swept up as much of the floor as she can get at; a third gives fodder to the oxen, the horse, and the donkey; a fourth lights the fire and prepares the morning meal, consisting principally of boiled goat's-milk, for the household; and a fifth sits down and kneads the bread for the afternoon's consumption. When all these little tasks have been accomplished, the peasant himself wakes up, and shouts lustily to his son that another day of heat and labour has commenced. The son, yawning and stretching himself, unwillingly obeys the summons: his first care is the cattle, and he rubs these down with a wisp of straw; then he opens the door, and looks out sleepily, more than half persuaded that he has been called at midnight instead of early dawn. The cool breeze and the stream of dull light that pour in convince him he is in error; wherefore, to make amends for his loitering, he hurries on the breakfast, and, so as not to lose time, commences an onslaught on whatever may be ready.

All the cocks and hens fly down screaming with delight from their roosts, and rush through the open door into the welcome day. There they are very noisy over their early scratching; and one old cock, who is the pink of gallantry, cackles mightily to his twenty wives over some unhappy grub that his sharp claws have brought to light. The old man seats himself with his morning pipe, soliloquising possibly on the mutability of human affairs. Here is he, Alley Ben Ahmed, who only twenty years ago was an out-o'-door lad in a cottage not half as big as his own. By perseverance and toil he has accumulated quite a fortune. His own house, his own wife and children, his goats, his poultry, his cattle, and his—— No, no; he has no hidden store; he won't admit that fact, be it ever so well established. The contentment of his face might betray it to some wealthy neighbour—some Turkish official. The idea is horrible, and he instantly relapses into the groaning, oppressed, ill-used vassal, you would suppose him to be, if you saw him only in the streets.

Presently, after the morning ablutions have been carefully attended to, the family eat heartily of this frugal fare; then the two elder girls, armed with milk-pots and a switch apiece, drive the goats before them, and take their way to the distant town, where, if they are early and punctual, they may count upon earning a pretty good supply of piastres. But you have no conception of the difficulties these girls have to overcome, even after they have entered the streets of the town. In the first place, the path they have to follow takes them out of the village, right away over an extensive heath, where brambles and briers grow luxuriantly, and where, as a natural result, it requires no little running about and screaming, no mild infliction of their switches, to induce the goats to keep together or to go ahead at all: they have a natural propensity to briers, and will stray on every available opportunity. Not a few thorns do these poor girls pick out of their feet, when compelled to run in amongst the heather to drive back some obstinate animal. But they are used to this kind of work; and the naked soles of their feet, from constant exposure, are as hard as ordinary shoe-leather. Eventually, the city-gates are reached, and as the general dust-heap is the centre of the streets, the poor goats have great temptations held out to them in the shape of melon-rinds, cabbage-stalks, and other garbage, all which they will persist in investigating, despite the threats of the two damsels. The goats stop as naturally from the instinct of habit opposite the doors of regular customers; what remains of the milk is disposed of in the market-place; and by eight o'clock the two maidens are driving their flock homeward again; the goats trotting all the way, although the heat is already intense, and the flies an insufferable plague; and so the poor girls reach home out of breath and weary, and, seated on the shady side of their hut, hand over the morning's gains to their father, exacting, as each coin is doled out, a renewed promise from the old man about red shoes for the approaching festival.

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* Ground boiled wheat.

† Native farrier.

But whilst these have been absent, what has been going on in the village? In the first place, the peasant has had his morning survey of the loft, for the purpose of handing down to his careful spouse the daily rations for household consumption, which done, he places the ladder on the roof of some outhouses, far beyond the reach of the women. He then goes to the village coffee-house, which is not much of a building, being nothing more or less than a large tree in the centre of the village, with a thatched cover suspended from its boughs, and rough wooden benches round its roots. Here are congregated all the worthies, inclusive of the Salbund, who has a couple of nags to shoe for the kekiah. The compliments of the morning are interchanged, coffee drank, and then the benches are cleared away and the place converted into a magistrate's office, till close upon mid-day. There are seldom many cases to occupy the court. One or two minor felonies of eggs, a charge or two of assault, and the calendar is closed. Then the kekiah and the elders pass the time in playing backgammon and talking politics. Sometimes there are large committee meetings to discuss the iniquities of some fresh imposed tax; but however important the subject may be, the parties disperse just before noon, and return to their respective homes for their mid-day meal, which is a substantial one, qualified with large draughts of cold spring-water.

But whilst the head of the house has been absent, the women indoors have had no sinecure. The whole place, inside and outside, has been swept and well purified with water, the windows have been thrown wide open, the fire indoors has been extinguished, and lit out in the yard; the hens have been driven into a hen-house, and have noisily proclaimed every addition to the stock of eggs; the children have been stuffed to repletion, washed, and turned out into the fields to play; the youngest girl has been to the butcher's, and brought home the scraggy-looking joint of an ancient ram, which is forthwith mashed up in a pestle and mortar, and transformed into their much-liked koobays. Another girl has been to the kitchen-gardens—for all the peasants have little spots cultivated near their fields—and though the winter is on the ground, seed-time and harvest gone by, there is abundance of onion-tops and wild marsh-mallow; and these two cooked together, and then fried in fresh butter, constitute a savoury and a wholesome repast. But in addition to this, there are the burghul and the khobies, the pickled chillies, cucumbers and turnips; the beckmege and dried fruits by way of dessert, so that the whole family has a substantial repast. The mother cooks for the whole family. The eldest daughter takes a large earthen jar, which she fills with milk, and then hermetically closes; seating herself with this between her knees, she shakes it to and fro for a good hour and a half, by which time the butter is produced, and her arms ache again with fatigue. Another daughter turns laundress, for the extent of their wardrobe is limited to a single change, and they are consequently obliged to wash every alternate day. And a very astonishing lot of linen is hung out to dry in the court-yard: papa's inexpressibles, which are only ten yards wide, ever so many folds; baby's toggery, which, like Joseph's coat of old, presents a remarkable mixture of colours and patchwork; and many other strange-shaped garments. The third daughter has been up to her eyes in needlework —just putting a few fresh patches into the brother's everyday coat. And when all these have done their respective tasks, a heavy shadow falls upon the entrance-door, and the old man walks in hot and hungry. Two minutes afterwards, the son drives in his yoke of oxen, and deposits his plough against the court-yard wall. The oxen lie down in the shade and ruminate. The son, who is exceedingly exhausted, washes his hands, and feet, and face, and then sits down to dinner with an appetite worthy of an alderman—in this respect, they are all pretty well off—and having dined, the dishes are washed up, and the mats shaken. The two men fill their pipes, and sit under the shadiest wall; the wife fetches them out a pillow apiece; and half an hour afterwards, when the heat of the day is intense, all the family go into the house, and closing doors and windows, enjoy an afternoon siesta.

It is good two hours after mid-day when the family are astir again. Then the son goes back to his work, and the old man loads his horse with a few bushels of wheat, which he intends carrying to a neighbouring village, to barter for cotton and other stuffs necessary for household uses. He drives the horse before him, and bestrides the donkey himself; and, as he may be several hours away, all the neighbours turn out to see the old man off, and wish him as many good wishes as though he were going a journey of a hundred miles instead of two.

The younger girls go out to look after the goats and kids. The elder one carries her butter to the town she visited in the morning, where she leaves it with a shopkeeper who always buys her produce. The children are sent to an afternoon school, where a fierce old mufti in goggles teaches them, with a very nasal twang, selections from the Koran.

The sun sets in the west; larks and feathered songsters gather together in the hedges, where the peasant's son has been ploughing wearily through the sultry afternoon, and they wake up echoes far and wide as they raise their grateful vespers for the blessings of another day. The young man shoulders his plough, and driving the oxen before him, plods homeward for supper and rest. The anxious children catch a glimpse of the old man coming in the distance, and they shout lustily, for there are sweetmeats in perspective. The old horse is carefully rubbed down, the saddle-bags unpacked, and out of these come sugared almonds for all the youngsters, who are in perfect ecstasies at the treat; but, above all, there are the promised red shoes for the two daughters, who have worked well and bravely, and merited the prize. The supper is partaken of in the open court-yard. The cocks and hens, the dog and cat, all assist at this meal; the former committing frequent felonies on the portions of the smaller children. Darkness gathers around, and the peasant and his family retire for the day; they have all worked hard and wearily, and sleep needs no second courting to close their eyelids in healthy slumber.

A PHILOSOPHER EN ROBE DE CHAMBRE.

At the time famous Professor Scaliger was prelecting at Leyden University—that marsh among the marshes, as he pleasantly terms it—it came to pass that two young gentlemen of the family of Vassan presented themselves one morning before him. They were but newly arrived, and bore letters from their mother praying for them the advice and countenance of the terrible critic. They were also fortified with introductions to Casaubon and other magnates of the university, whose attentions were perhaps limited to the scanty measure that has found favour with 'dons' of all countries and all ages. But the grim professor soon took a fancy to the young men. They were eager and respectful listeners, and soon came to be privileged with what is known as the run of the house. They were to be met there at all hours of the day. At meals, and after meals—all through the long evenings they sat and hearkened while the professor spoke on, and, like Coleridge, delighted exceedingly in the sound of his own accents.

It is not to be supposed that our demure students were idle all this time. While the unconscious philologist was holding forth upon men, manners, books, everything, in short, it never entered into his head that the listeners at his feet were playing the same *rôle* as Boswell had done in Bolt Court, or O'Meara at St Helena, and the Rev. Mr Dyce so lately at Samuel Rogers's breakfast-parties. When he had been pouring forth, for hours together, all his secret griefs, his little animosities, his vindictive epithets, and nicknames, he little dreamed that the simple, open-mouthed chiels before him were takin' notes—mentally, at least—which that same night would be written down against him in the retirement of an upper chamber. Poor Professor Scaliger! how he would have stormed and raved, and showered on them his favourite epithets of *fou*, *fat*, and *ane!*

When they had run their academic course, the young men went forth upon the world, bearing with them in their mails a certain manuscript volume filled in the questionable manner we have described. It was not to be doubted that, having sat at the feet of so great a man, they would turn out shining lights in their generation. But soon an ugly rumour was noised abroad; soon a grievous scandal was wafted across the marshes to the walls of Leyden. The two chosen ones had proved but rotten branches after all, and had fallen away from the true faith. Worse than that, one had assumed the cowl in a monastery near Paris, where for years after he was visited by the curious and the learned.

Later, it was whispered about that there was in existence a volume of the great man's sayings and opinions—of most piquant flavour—and lying perdu somewhere in Paris. Instantly the whole world of savans and bibliophilists became wild with excitement. It was begged, borrowed, greedily devoured, passed from hand to hand, and, as it afterwards appeared, often transcribed; and not very long after, an intelligent pirate at La Haye—in those days, a famous Riff station for pirate booksellers—issued a neat hot-pressed edition, bearing title, *Scaligerana.*

A strange book it is, written in a composite dialect, half French, half Latin. A singular kind of *argot* is the result, which is not, however, without a certain force and nervousness characteristic of the man. Let us now suppose him seated with his two admiring pupils at his feet, and ready for a long, quiet evening. True, outside it is not altogether so quiet; for, as he once sorrowfully told them: 'In this place every one may disturb his next neighbour with impunity. They come and riot under my very windows, and I can do nothing to stop them.' [Where were the proctors?] 'Even on fast-days, they drink all day long, even from sunrise.' With all these *désagrémens*, he is pretty well contented with the university. The only drawback is the loss of all his teeth—no doubt owing to the marshes. This was the more provoking, that there was to be seen in the town a stately dame who was fully ninety-nine years old, and yet boasted a handsome set. But why not have recourse to the cunning artist who fitted the Italian nobleman with a fine ivory set in gold mountings? True, he would have to take them out at meal-times, which was an objection; and when he spoke, he would have to be putting his hand continually to his mouth to prevent their falling out, which was a further objection. So, perhaps, on the whole, he was quite as well off as the Italian nobleman.

The great scholar, albeit so devoted to his books, had travelled and had met with a few incidents worth noting. He had seen Mary Queen of Scots, whom he rapturously allows to have been *une belle créature.* He had had an interview with the great Henry of Navarre, who had been pleased to make him the following remark: 'Hold your tongue, monsieur; you don't know what you are talking about.' He took a peep into the royal library, and found the romance of *Amadis* reposing between Plato and Aristotle. Of his queen, too, he has something to tell. A certain Sieur de Montpesat, who was a paragon of impudence (*le plus glorieux vilain*), met her at the baths of Béarn. 'The queen said to him: "If I did not hold in all honour the king of France, your master, I should drive you from my domains sooner than you wot of!" Said he: "Madame, I need not go far for that." Then she: "Begone, sir, this instant!"' For this smart repartee, his own uncle volunteered to put him to death; but the queen generously interfered. Indeed, there appears to have been in those days a rather summary mode of dealing with all offences. Thus, one unfortunate, named Spifame, was publicly executed for having been so indiscreet as to take a lady into his house whose husband happened to be still living. When he himself was at Geneva, a frail fair one was put to death by drowning. 'She was very pretty, and a brunette,' he adds. 'All the ministers cried hard over her. So M. de la Tremblay told me, for I had not the heart to go and see the execution.' However, he once went to look at two men broken on the wheel, 'one of whom spat out as far as any other man could do, laughing heartily all the time at his companion, who was screaming under the blows.' He seems to have had a morbid fancy for this subject, and is curious in scaffold lore. Thus: 'There was an executioner at Geneva called Maistre Louis, who was no other than a noble gentleman of Savoy, who had taken to this craft to spite his brothers, who had kept him out of his inheritance.' The Bordeaux Calcraft had grown so skilful from long practice, 'that very often the head remained upon the shoulders even after the blow!' The gentleman who filled that office at Paris was quite as dexterous; he had only to let his sword drop carelessly, and the head and trunk were parted. At Venice, they had something very like the guillotine. 'The criminal places his head upon a block, and upon the back of his neck is laid a blade of iron, very sharp and heavy. It is then struck smartly with a hammer, and the head is severed like a piece of wood.'

It is impossible not to suspect the great critic of a little weakness for the good things of this life. How he yearns after the flesh-pots of Chambery! 'O what good cheer,' he says, 'we had in that town! Bread, wine, fish, all of the best! but the attendance, only indifferent. O the excellent wine, bread, and fish they eat at Chambery. Far better cheer there than at Geneva! In no part of the world have I seen a market to compare with it—plenty of everything!' At Bordeaux they have excellent wheaten bread. The Gascons make delicious bread. Still Bordeaux must, on the whole, give way to Perigueux. There, the living is admirable; and also at Agen, far better than at Bordeaux. Still Perigueux had its drawback. There are spots upon the sun, and the cloth table-linen was not of the cleanest; so that, perhaps, it is to the Grande Chartreuse that he looks back with fondest regret; for there they live on claret and white wines, and serve up astounding omelets of a hundred eggs each! Languedoc, too, is a land running with milk and honey; for there is to be found the best oil in the world; not your common nut-oil, which, though used in the king's kitchen for dressing fricassees, still wants the delicate flavour of the Languedoc virgin oil with which they season their exquisite soups. Discoursing in another place on mutton, he once more fondly recurs to Languedoc, where it is unsurpassed. It seems there is a peculiar flavour about the Languedoc mutton owing to the sheep being fed upon thyme. 'O what delicious eating!' he exclaims with rapture. The university mutton was only pretty good; it had a disagreeable hircine taste, which could only be got rid of by keeping it a long time in pickle. But of all dishes in the world, commend him to a green goose and garlic! This he pronounces fare for a king!

The great scholar had a smart trenchant way of disposing of those who ventured to differ with him. For instance, a certain man of the name of Snellius, 'came once to tell me that I was all astray in not reckoning dates after his method. I soon sent him about his business, with this answer: "Ass! why should I reckon dates after your method?"' This was like Mr Willet's manner of tackling Solomon Daisy.

An author, bearing the singular name of Popma, is thus despatched: 'Popma has written wretchedly on Varro. O what miserable criticism that of Popma! With all he has written, he has only just been gathering so much dirt! What a butt I made of him at Geneva!'

Poor Popma. The Emperor Rodolph is an utter hog; a certain Robertelli is found to be an ass, a beast, and a grand *ratisseur;* while the Jesuits are, one and all, written down asses, fools, pedants, *fats*, devils incarnate.

One night the professor saw a ghost! He shall tell the story himself. 'Devils,' he says, 'only shew themselves to poor weak souls. They would take good care of coming near me, for I would destroy them, every one of them. When they appear to sorcerers, they take the shape of a goat, on which account I never eat of goat's flesh. My father never was afraid of the devil, neither am I. He used to say that the devil was afraid to come near him. One night I saw a black man mounted on a black horse standing in the middle of a bog, and my horse was just following him, as I was dozing in the saddle. Count Dabin and some others were on a good way before, whilst I had lingered a little behind. I called out to the dark man: he made me no answer. My horse was just in the bog, and if I had not been very sharp, I should assuredly have been lost. I dragged him back just in time. The others heard my cries; and the whole of that night—for seven entire hours—we wandered about. The devil often decoys men into marshes with a view to their destruction. My belief is, that this was a judgment on us, because one of our party was a dreadful blasphemer.' Perhaps, looking at the late hour of the night, and the strange fact of his being asleep upon his horse, it might be possible to offer a simpler but more profane solution of the whole business.

When he was in London, he was greatly astonished at seeing the bridge all stuck over with human heads and quarters as thick as the masts of the ships. He found there twelve excellent libraries. There were some good books among them, he allows, especially historical manuscripts. They had printed a catalogue of these latter; but, as usual, omitted about ten times as much as they printed. He had heard of the Bodleian, and passes judgment on it in this fashion: 'There was a certain knight who presented a famous library to Oxford. It was worth about L.40,000. He must have been a rich man. I say I have looked over the catalogue: they are nearly all ordinary books.' The doctrine as to literary *meum* and *tuum* was very lax in those days; at least, M. du Puy's conduct must be deemed questionable. 'O Pierre du Puy, what a good creature that was! He used to write to me such a store of things I was so anxious to know about. M. du Puy carried off some manuscripts from an abbey in this way; while some kept the door-keeper in conversation, others were lowering the books from a window where there were people waiting to receive them.'

But it is full time to let the ancient scholar depart in peace.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXXVII.—THE WRITING ON THE MAGUEY.

The skill of the trackers was no longer called in need; the war-trail was as easily followed as a toll-road: a blind man could have guided himself along such a well-trodden highway.

Our rate of speed was now ruled by the capacity of our horses. Alas! their power was nearly at an end. They had been two days and a night under the saddle, with but a few hours to refresh themselves by food or rest: they could not hold out much longer.

One by one they began to lag, until the greater number of them followed with tottering step hundreds of yards in the rear.

It was in vain to contend against nature. The men were still willing, though they too were wearied to death; but their horses were quite done up—even whip and spur could force them no further. Only my own matchless steed could have continued the journey. Alone I might have advanced, but that would have been madness. What could I have accomplished alone?

Night was fast coming down: it was already twilight. I saw by the clouded sky we should have no moon. We might follow the trail with our waxen torches—not yet burnt out—but that would no longer be safe. For myself, I was reckless enough to have risked life in any way, but the lives of my comrades were not mine. I could not give them—I should not wastefully fling them away.

Reluctantly I glided from my saddle, gave my steed to the grass, and sat down upon the earth. My followers coming up, said not a word, but picketing their horses, seated themselves around me. One by one they stretched themselves along the sward, and in ten minutes all were asleep.

I alone could not sleep; the fever of unrest was upon me; the demon of thought would not let me close my eyes. Though my orbs ached with the long protracted vigil, I thought that 'not all the drowsy syrups of the world' could have given repose to my nerves at that moment. I felt as one who suffers under delirium, produced by the intoxicating cup, the fearful *mania-a-potu.* I could neither sleep nor rest.

I could not even remain seated. I rose to my feet and wandered around, without heed of where I was going. I strode over the recumbent forms of my sleeping companions; I went among the horses; I paced backwards and forwards along the banks of the stream.

There *was* a stream—a small arroyo or rivulet. It was this that had caused me to halt in that particular spot; for wild as were my thoughts, I had enough of reason left to know that we could not encamp without water. The sight of the arroyo had decided my wavering resolution, and upon its banks, almost mechanically, I had drawn bridle and dismounted.

I once more descended to the bed of the stream, and, raising the water in the palms of my hands, repeatedly applied it to my lips and temples. The cool liquid refreshed me, and seemed to soothe both my nerves and my spirit. After a time, both felt calmer, and I sat down upon the bank, and watched for a while the clear rivulet rippling past over its bed of yellow sand and glistening pebbles of quartz. The water was perfectly diaphanous; and, though the sun was no longer shining, I could see tiny silver-fish, of the genus *hyodon*, sporting themselves in the lowest depths of the pool. How I envied them their innocent gambols, their life of crystal purity and freedom! Here, in this remote prairie-stream, dwelt not the alligator, nor the ravenous garfish; here came no dolphin or shark to chase them, no tyrant of the waters to put them in fear. To be envied, indeed, such an *insouciant*, happy existence!

I watched them for a long while, till I thought that my eyes were growing heavy, and, after all, I might sleep. The murmur of the arroyo helped to increase this inclination to repose, and, perhaps, I might have slept; but at that moment chancing to look around, my eyes fell upon an object that again drove sleep far away, and I was soon as wakeful as ever.

Close to my elbow where I had seated myself grew a large plant of the Mexican aloe (*agave Americana*). It was the wild maguey, of course, but of a species with broad fleshy leaves of dark-green colour, somewhat resembling the maguey of cultivation. I noticed that one of the great blades of the plant was bruised down, and the spine, which had terminated it, torn off. All this would not have drawn my attention: I was already aware that the Indians had made a halt where we were encamped, and their sign was plenteous around—in the tracks of their animals, and the broken branches of trees. One of their horses or mules might have munched at the maguey in passing, and, viewing the bruised blade from a distance, I should have hazarded just such a conjecture. But my eyes were close to the plant, and, to my astonishment, I observed that there was *writing upon the leaf!*

I turned over upon my knees, and seizing the huge blade, bent it down before me, so as to obtain a better view of its surface. I read:

'*Captured by Comanches—a war-party—have many captives—women and children—ay de mi! pobres niñas! north-west from this place. Saved from death; alas! I fear'*——

The writing ended abruptly. There was no signature, but it needed not that. I had no doubts about who was the writer; in fact, rude as was the chirography—from the materials used—I easily identified the hand. It was Isolina de Vargas who had written.

I saw that she had torn off the terminal spine, and using it as a stylus, had graven those characters upon the epidermis of the plant. Sweet subtle spirit! under any guise I could have recognised its outpourings.

'Saved from death'—thank Heaven for that!—'alas! I fear.' Oh, what feared she? Was it worse than death? that terrible fate—too terrible to think of?

She had broken off without finishing the sentence. Why had she done so? The sheet was broad—would have held many more words—why had she not written more? Did she dread to tell the cause of her fear? or had she been interrupted by the approach of some of her tyrant captors? O merciful Heaven! save me from thought!

I re-read the words over and over: there was nothing more. I examined the other leaves of the plant—on both sides, concave and convex, I examined them—not a word more could I find: it was all she had written.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE SOUTHERN SAVAGE.

I need not tell how deeply I was affected by the unexpected communication. All at once were decided a variety of doubts; all at once was I made aware of the exact situation.

Isolina still lived—that was no longer doubtful; and the knowledge produced joy. More than this: she was still uninjured—able to think, to act, to write—not only living, but well. The singular 'billet' was proof of all this. Another point—her hands must have been free—her hands at least, else how could she have traced those lines? and with such a pencil? It argued indulgence or tender treatment on the part of her captors.

Another point yet. *She knew I was in pursuit.* She *had* seen me, then, as I galloped after. It was her cry I had heard as the steed dashed into the chapparal. She had recognised me, and called back. She knew I would still be following; she knew I was following, and for me was the writing meant. Sweet subtle spirit!

Once more I devoured the welcome words; but my heart grew heavy as I pondered over them. What had caused her to break off so abruptly? What was it her intention to have said? Of what was she in fear? It was my conjecture about this that caused the heaviness upon my heart. I gave way to horrid imaginings.

Naturally my thoughts reverted to her captors; naturally I reflected upon the character of the prairie savage—so different from that of the forest Indian, opposite as is the aspect of their homes, and perhaps influenced by this very cause, though there are many others. Climate—contact with Spanish civilisation, so distinct from Saxon—the horse—conquest over white foes—concubinage with white and beautiful women, the daughters of the race of Andalusia: all these have combined to produce in the southern Indian a spiritual existence that more resembles Andalusia than England—more like to Mexico than Boston or New York.

There is not so much difference between Paris and the prairies, between the *habitué* of the Bal Mabille and the horse-Indian of the plains. No cold ascetic this—no romantic savage, alike celebrated for silence and continence—but a true voluptuary, gay of thought and free of tongue, amorous, salacious, immoral. In nine cases out of ten, the young Comanche is a boastful Lothario as any *flaneur* that may be met upon the Boulevards; the old, a lustful sinner—women the idol of both. Women is the constant theme of their conversation, their motive for every act. For them they throw the prairie dice; for them they race their swift mustangs. To win them, they paint in hideous guise; to buy them, they steal horses; to capture them, they go to war!

And yet, with all their wanton love, they are true tyrants to the sex. Wife they have none—for it would be sheer sacrilege to apply this noble title to the 'squaw' of a Comanche. Mistress is scarcely a fitter term—rather say *slave*. Hers is a hard lot indeed: hers it is to hew the wood and draw the water; to strike the tent and pitch it; to load the horse and pack the dog; to grain the skin and cure the meat; to plant the maize, the melon, squash; to' hoe and reap them; to wait obsequious on her lounging lord, anticipate his whim or wish, be true to him, or lose her ears or nose—for such horrid forfeiture is, by Comanche custom, the punishment of conjugal infidelity!

But hard as is the lot of the native wife, harder still is that of the white captive. 'Tis hers to endure all the ills enumerated, with still another—the hostility of the squaw herself. The white captive is truly the slave of a slave, the victim of a treble antipathy—of race, of colour, of jealousy. Ofttimes is she beaten, abused, mutilated; and rarely does the apathetic lord interfere to protect her from this feminine but fiendlike persecution.

These were not imaginings; they were not fancies begot in my own brain. Would they had been so! Too well did I know they were facts—horrid realities.

Can you wonder that sleep was shaken from my eyelids?—that I could not think of rest or stay, till I had delivered my loved one—my betrothed—from the danger of such a destiny?

All thought of sleep was banished—even weariness forsook me. I felt fresh as if I had slept; my nerves were strung for emprise. It was excitement renewed by what I had read—the impatience of a new and keen apprehension.

I would have mounted and gone forward, spurning rest and sleep; regardless of danger, would I have followed; but what could I do alone?

Ay, and what with my few followers? Ha! I had not thought of this; up to that moment, I had not put this important question, and I had need to reflect upon the answer. What if we should overtake this band of brigands? Booty-laden as they were, and cumbered with captives, surely we could come up with them, by night or by day; but what then? Ay, what then?

There were nine of us, and we were in pursuit of a war-party of at least one hundred in number!—one hundred braves armed and equipped for battle—the choice warriors of their tribe—flushed with late success, and vengeful against ourselves on account of former defeat. If conquered, we need look for no mercy at their hands; *if* conquered—how could it be otherwise? Nine against a hundred! How could *we* conquer?

Up to this moment, I had not thought of the result; I was borne along by only one impulse—the idea of overtaking the steed, and rescuing his rider from her perilous situation. It was only within the hour that her peril had assumed a new phase; only an hour since we had learned that she had escaped from one danger to be brought within the influence of another.

At first had I felt joy, but the feeling was of short existence. I recognised in the new situation a greater peril than that she had outlived. She had been rescued from death to become the victim of dishonour!

CHAPTER LXXIX.

A SUBTERRANEAN FIRE.

In the midst of my meditations, night descended upon the earth. It promised to be a moonless night. A robe of sable clouds formed a sombre lining to the sky, and through this neither moon nor stars were visible.

It grew darker apace, until in the dim light I could scarcely distinguish the forms of my companions—neither men nor horses, though both were near me. The men were still asleep, stretched along the grass in various attitudes, like so many bodies upon a battle-field. The horses were too hungry to sleep—the constant 'crop-crop' told that they were greedily browsing upon the sward of gramma-grass that, by good-fortune, grew luxuriantly around. This would be the best rest for them, and I was glad to think that this splendid provender would in a few hours recruit their strength. It was the *chondrosium fœneum*, the favourite food of horses and cattle, and in its effects upon their condition almost equal to the bean or the oat. I knew it would soon freshen the jaded animals, and make them ready for the road. At least in this there was some consolation.

Notwithstanding the preoccupation of my thoughts, I began to be sensible of a physical discomfort, which, despite their low latitude, is often experienced upon the southern prairies—cold. A chill breeze had set in with the night, which in half an hour became a strong and violent wind, increasing in coldness as in strength.

In that half-hour the thermometer must have fallen at least fifty Fahrenheit degrees; and such a phenomenon is not rare upon the plains of Texas. The wind was the well-known 'norther,' which often kills both men and animals that chance to be exposed to its icy breath.

I have endured the rigour of a Canadian winter—have crossed the frozen lakes—have slept upon a snow-wreath amidst the wild wastes of Rupert's Land; but I cannot remember cold more intensely chilling than that I have suffered in a Texan norther. This extreme does not arise from the absolute depression of the thermometer—which at least is but a poor indicator of either heat or cold—I mean the sensation of either. It is more probably the contrast arising from the sudden change—the exposure—the absence of proper clothing or shelter—the state of the blood—with other like circumstances, that cause both heat and cold to be more sensibly felt.

I had ofttimes experienced the chill blast of the norther, but never more acutely than upon that night. The day had been sweltering hot—the thermometer at noon ranging about the one-hundredth degree, while in the first hour of darkness it could not have been far above the twentieth. Had I judged by my sensations, I should have put it even lower. Certainly it had passed the freezing-point, and sharp sleet and hail were borne upon the wings of the wind.

With nerves deranged from want of rest and sleep—after the hot day's march—after the perspiration produced by long exposure upon the heated surface of the burnt prairie—I perhaps felt the cold more acutely than I should otherwise have done. My blood seemed to stagnate and freeze within my veins.

I was fain to wrap around my body a buffalo-robe, which some careless savage had dropped upon the trail. My followers were not so well furnished; starting as we had done, without any thought of being absent for the night, no preparation had been made for camping out. Only a portion of them chanced to have their blankets strapped upon the cantles of their saddles; these were now the fortunate ones.

The norther had roused all of them from their slumbers—had awaked them as suddenly as a douche of cold water would have done; and one and all were groping about in the darkness—some seeking for their blankets, some for such shelter as was afforded by the lee-side of the bushes. Fortunately there were saddle-blankets, and these were soon dragged from the backs of the horses. The poor brutes themselves suffered equally with their owners; they stood cowering under the cold, with their hips to the cutting blast, their limbs drawn close together, and their flanks shaggy and shivering. Some half sheltered themselves behind the bushes, scarce caring to touch the grass at their feet.

It would have been easy enough to make a fire; there was dry wood in plenty near the spot, and of the best kind for burning—the large species of mezquite. Some of the men were for kindling fires at once, regardless of consequences; but this design was overruled by the more prudent of the party. The trappers were strongly against it. Cold as was the night, and dark, they knew that neither the norther nor the darkness would deter Indians from being abroad. A party might be out upon the prowl; the very buffalo-skin we had picked up might bring a squad of them back; for it was the grand robe of some brave or chief, whose whole life-history was delineated in hieroglyphical painting upon its inner surface. To have made a fire, might have cost us our lives; so alleged the trappers, Rube and Garey. It would be better to endure the cold, than risk our scalps; so counselled they.

But for all that, Rube had no idea of being starved to death: he could kindle a fire, and burn it upon an open prairie, without the least fear of its being seen; and in a few minutes' time he had succeeded in making one that could not have been discovered by the most sharp-sighted Indian in creation. I had watched the operation with some interest.

He first collected a quantity of dead leaves, dry grass, and short sticks of the mezquite-tree—all of which he placed under his saddle-blanket, to prevent the rain and sleet from wetting them. This done, he drew out his bowie-knife, and with the blade 'crowed' a hole into the turf about a foot deep, and ten inches or a foot in diameter. In the bottom of this hole he placed the grass and leaves, having first ignited them by means of his flint, steel, and 'punk' tinder, all of which implements formed part of the contents of Rube's pouch and possible sack—ever present. On the top of the now blazing leaves and grass he placed the dry sticks—first the smaller ones, and then those of larger dimensions—until the hole was filled up to the brim—and over all he laid the piece of turf, originally cut from the surface, and which fitted as neatly as a lid.

His furnace being now finished, the trapper 'hunkered' down close to its edge—in such a position as to embrace the fire between his thighs, and have it nearly under him. He then drew his old blanket over his shoulders, allowing it to droop behind until he had secured it under the salient points of his lank angular hips. In front he passed the blanket over his knees, and both ends reaching the ground, were gripped tightly between his toes. The contrivance was complete; and there sat the old trapper like a handglass over a plant of spring rhubarb, a slight smoke oozing through the apertures of the scant blanket, and curling up around his 'ears' as though he was hatching upon a hotbed. But no fire could be seen, and Rube shivered no longer.

He soon found imitators. The young trapper had already constructed a similar furnace; and the others were soon warming themselves by this simple but ingenious device.

I did not disdain to avail myself of the extra 'shaft' which the kind-hearted Garey had sunk for my accommodation; and having placed myself by its side, and drawn the ample robe over my shoulders, I felt as warm as if seated in front of a sea-coal fire.

Under other circumstances, I might have joined in the merriment produced in my companions by the ludicrous spectacle which we presented—a comic spectacle indeed; nine of us squatted at intervals over the ground, the blue smoke escaping through the interstices of our robes and blankets, and rising around our heads, as though one and all of us were on fire!

Wind, sleet, and darkness continued throughout the whole night—cold wind, sharp icy sleet, and black darkness, that seemed palpable to the touch. Ever so eager, ever so fresh, we could not have advanced along the trail. Grand war-trail as it was, it could not have been traced under that amorphous obscurity, and we had no means of carrying a light, even had this been safe. We had no lantern, and the norther with one blast would have whisked out a torch of pitch-pine.

We thought no more of going forward, until either the day should break or the wind come to a lull.

At midnight we replenished our subterranean fires, and remained on the ground. Hail, rain, wind, and darkness. My companions rested their heads upon their knees, or nodding slept. No sleep for me—not even the repose of thought. Like some fevered sufferer on his wakeful couch, I counted the hours—the minutes. The minutes seemed hours.

Rain, hail, sleet, and wind seemed, like darkness itself, to belong to the night. As long as night lasted, so long continued they. When it came to an end, all vanished together—the norther had exhausted its strength.

A wild turkey—killed before nightfall—with some steaks of the peccary-pork, furnished us with an ample breakfast. It was hastily cooked, and hastily eaten; and as the first streak of dawn appeared along the horizon, we were in our saddles, and advancing upon the trail.

CHAPTER LXXX.

A RED EPISTLE.

The trail led north-west, as written upon the maguey. No doubt Isolina had heard her captors forespeak their plans. I knew that she herself understood something of the Comanche language. The accomplishment may appear strange, and not strange either, when it is known that her mother could have spoken it well: with her it was a *native tongue*.

But even without this knowledge she might still have learned the designs of the savages—for these southern Comanches are accomplished linguists; many of them can speak the beautiful language of Andalusia! There was a time when a portion of the tribe submitted to the teaching of the mission padres; besides, a few among them might boast—which they do not—of Iberian blood!

No doubt, the captive in their midst had overheard them discussing their projects.

We had ridden about two hours, when we came upon the ground where the Indians had made their night-camp. We approached it warily and with stealth, for we were now travelling with great caution. We had need. Should a single savage, straggling behind, set eyes upon us, we might as well be seen by the whole band. If discovered upon the war-trail, our lives would not be worth much. Some of us might escape; or if all, at least our plan would be completely frustrated.

I say plan, for I had formed one. During the long vigil of the night, my thoughts had not been idle, and a course of action I had traced out, though it was not yet fully developed in my mind. Circumstances might yet alter it, or aid me in its execution.

We approached their night-encampment, then, warily and with stealth. The smoke of its smouldering fires pointed out the place, and warned us from afar. We found it quite deserted—the gaunt wolf and coyoté alone occupying the ground, disputing with each other possession of the hide and bones of a horse—the débris of the Indian breakfast.

Had we not known already, the trappers could have told by the sign of the camp to what tribe the Indians belonged. There were still standing the poles of a tent—only one—doubtless the lodge of the head-chief. The poles were temporary ones—saplings cut from the adjacent thicket. They were placed in a circle, and meeting at the top, were tied together with a piece of thong, so that, when covered, the lodge would have exhibited the form of a perfect cone. This we knew was the fashion of the Comanche tent.

'Ef 't hed 'a been Kickapoo,' said Rube, who took the opportunity of displaying his knowledge, 'th'ud 'a bent thur poles in'ard, so's to make a sort o' a roun top, d'ee see; an ef 't hed 'a been Wacoes or Witcheetoes, thu'd 'a left a hole at the top, to let out thur smoke. Delawurs an Shawnee wud 'a hed tents, jest like whites; but thet ur ain't thur way o' makin a fire. In a Shawnee fire, the logs 'ud 'a been laid wi' one eend turned in an the tother turned out, jest like the star on a Texas flag, or the spokes o' a wagon-wheel. Likeways Cherokee an Choctaw wud 'a hed reg'lar tents, but thur fire wud 'a been alser diff'rint. They'd 'a sot the logs puralell, side by side, an lit 'em only at one eend, an then pushed 'em up as fast as they burn'd. Thet's thur way. 'Ee see these hyur logs is sot diff'rint—thur lit in the middle, an thet's Kimanch for sartint—it ur.'

Rube's knowledge extended further. The savages had been astart as early as ourselves. They had decamped about daylight, and were now exactly two hours ahead of us on the trail. Why were they travelling so rapidly? Not from fear of pursuit by any enemy. The soldiers of Mexico—had these been regarded by them—were too busy with the Saxon foe, and *vice versâ*. They could hardly be expecting *us* to make an expedition to rob them of their captives. Perhaps they were driving forward to be in time for the great herds of buffalo, that, along with the cold northers, might now be looked for in the northern part of the Comanche range. This was the explanation given by the trappers—most probably the true one.

Under the influence of singular emotions, I rode over the ground. There were other signs besides those of the savage—signs of the plunder with which they were laden—signs of civilisation. There were fragments of broken cups and musical instruments—torn leaves of books—remnants of dresses, silks and velvets—a small satin slipper (the peculiar *chaussure* of the Mexican manola) side by side with a worn-out mud-stained moccasin—fit emblems of savage and civilised life.

There was no time for speculating on so curious a confusion. I was looking for signs of her—for traces of my betrothed.

I cast around me inquiring glances. Where was it probable she had passed the night? Where?

Involuntarily my eyes rested upon the naked poles—the tent of the chief. How could it be otherwise? Who among all the captives like her? grandly beautiful to satisfy the eye even of a savage chieftain—grandly, magnificently beautiful, how could she escape his notice? There, in his lodge, shrouded under the brown skins of buffaloes—under hideous devices—in the arms of a painted, keel-bedaubed savage—his arms, brawn and greasy—embraced—oh!——

'Young fellur! I ain't much o' a skollur; but I'd stake a pack o' beaver plew agin a plug o' Jeemes River, thet this hyur manurscrip wur entended for yurself, an nob'dy else. Thur's writin upon it—thet's clur, an mighty kewr'ous ink I reck'n thet ur. Oncest ov a time I kud 'a read write or print eythur as easy as fallin off a log; for thur wur a Yankee fellur on Duck Crik thet kep a putty consid'able school thur, an the ole 'oman—thet ur Mrs Rawlins—hed this child put thro' a reg'lar coorse o' the Testymint. I remembers readin 'bout thet ur cussed niggur as toated the possible sack—Judeas, ef I reccollex right, wur the durned raskul's name—ef I kud 'a laid claws on him, I'd a raised his har in the shakin o' a goat's tail. Wagh! thet I wud.'

Rube's indignation against the betrayer having reached its climax, brought his speech to a termination.

I had not waited for its finale. The object which he held between his fingers had more interest for me, than either the history of his own early days, or the story of the betrayal. It was a paper—a note actually folded, and addressed 'Warfield!' He had found it upon the grass, close to where the tent had stood, where it was held in the crotch of a split stick, the other end of which was stuck into the ground.

No wonder the trapper had remarked upon the ink; there was no mistaking the character of that livid red: the writing was *in blood!*

Hastily unfolding the paper, I read:

'*Henri! I am still safe, but in dread of a sad fate—the fate of the poor white captive among these hideous men. Last night I feared it, but the Virgin shielded me. It has not come. Oh! I shall not submit—I shall die by my own hand. A strange chance has hitherto saved me from this horrid outrage. No! it was not chance, but Heaven that interposed. It is thus: Two of my captors claim me—one, the son of the chief—the other, the wretch to whom you granted life and freedom. Would to God it had been otherwise! Of the two, he of white blood is the viler savage—bad, brutal—a very demon. Both took part in the capture of the steed, therefore both claim me as their "property." The claim is not yet adjusted; hence have I been spared. But, alas! I fear my hour is nigh. A council is to be held that will decide to which of these monsters I am to be given. If to either, it is a horrid fate; if to neither, a doom still more horrible. Perchance, you know their custom: I should be common property—the victim of all. Dios de mi alma! Never—never! Death—welcome death!*

'*Fear not, Henri, lord of my heart! fear not that I shall dishonour your love. No—sacred in my breast, its purity shall be preserved, even at the sacrifice of my life. I shall bathe it with my blood. Ah me! my heart is bleeding now! They come to drag me away. Farewell! farewell!*'

Such were the contents of the page—the fly-leaf of a torn missal. Upon the other side was a vignette—a picture of Dolores, the weeping saint of Mexico! Had it been chosen, the emblem could scarcely have been more appropriate.

I thrust the red writing into my bosom; and, without waiting to exchange a word with my companions, pressed forward upon the trail.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

MORE WRITING IN RED.

The men followed as before. We needed no trackers to point out the way; the path was plain as a drover's road—a thousand hoofs had made their mark upon the ground.

We rode at a regular pace, not rapidly. I was in no hurry to come up with the savages; I desired not to get sight of them before nightfall; it would be better not, lest they might also get sight of us.

The plan I proposed to myself for the rescue of my betrothed, could not be accomplished in the daytime; darkness alone could avail me in carrying it out, and for nightfall must I wait.

We could easily have overtaken the savages before night. They were but two short hours in the advance of us, and would be certain—as is their custom on the war-trail—to make a noon-halt of several hours' duration. Even Indian horses require to be rested.

We calculated the rate at which they were travelling—how many miles to the hour. The prairie-men could tell to a furlong, both the gait and the distance.

The tracks of the poor captives were still seen along the trail. This shewed that the party could not have been going faster than a walk.

The prairie-men alleged there were many horses without riders—led or driven; many mules, too—the product of the foray. Why were the poor captives not permitted to ride them?

Was it sheer cruelty, or brutal indifference on the part of their captors? Did the inhuman monsters gloat over the sufferings of these unfortunates, and deny them even the alleviation of physical pain? The affirmative answer to all these questions was probably the true one, since hardly better—no better, indeed—is the behaviour of these savages towards the women of their own blood and kind—their own squaws.

Talk not to me of the noble savage—of the simplicity and gentleness of that condition falsely termed a 'state of nature.' It is not nature. God meant not man to be a wild Ishmaelite on the face of the earth. Man was made for civilisation—for society; and only under its influence does he assume the form and grace of true nobility. Leave him to himself—to the play of his instincts—to the indulgence of his evil impulses—and man becomes a brute, a beast of prey. Even worse, for wolf and tiger gently consort with their kind, and still more gently with their family: they feel the tenderness of the family tie. Where is the savage upon all the earth who does not usurp dominion, and practise the meanest tyranny over his weaker mate? Where can you find him? Not on the blood-stained karoos of Africa, not upon the forest-plains of the Amazon, not by the icy shores of the Arctic Sea, certainly not upon the prairies of North America.

No man can be noble who would in wrath lay his finger upon weaker woman; talk not, then, of the noble savage!—fancy of poets, myth of romancers!

The tracks of riderless horses, the footsteps of walking women—tender girls and children—upon that long tiresome trail, had for me a cruel significance—those slender tiny tracks of pretty feet—*pobres niñas!*

There was one that fixed my attention more than the rest: every now and then my eyes were upon it; I fancied I could identify it. It was exactly the size, I thought. The perfect symmetry and configuration, the oval curve of the heel, the high instep, the row of small graduated globes made by the impression of the toes, the smooth surface left by the imprint of the delicate epidermis—all these points seemed to characterise the footprint of a lady.

Surely it could not be hers? O surely she would not be toiling along that weary track? Cruel as were the hearts of her captors, brutal as were their natures, surely they would not inflict this unnecessary pain? Beauty like hers should command kinder treatment, should inspire compassion even in the breast of a savage! Alas! I deemed it doubtful.

We rode slowly on, not desirous of overtaking the foe: we were allowing them time to depart from their noon halting-place. We might as well have stopped for a while, but I could not submit to the repose of a halt. Motion, however slow, appeared progress, and in some measure hindered me from dwelling upon thoughts that only produced unnecessary pain.

Notwithstanding the incumbrance of their spoils, the Indians must have been travelling faster than we. They had no fear of foes to retard them; nought to require either spies or caution. They were now in their own country—in the very heart of the Comanche range—and in dread of no enemy. They were moving freely and without fear. We, on the contrary, had to keep our scouts in the advance; every bend of the road had to be reconnoitred by them, every bush examined, every rise of the ground approached with extreme care and watchfulness. These manœuvres occupied time, and we moved slowly enough.

It was after mid-day when we arrived at the noon-camp of the savages. They had kindled fires and cooked flesh. The smoke, as before, warned us, and approaching under cover, we perceived that they were gone. The bones, clean picked, were easily identified, and the mid-day meal shewed that there had been no change in the diet of these hippophagists: dinner and déjeûner had been alike—drawn from the same larder.

Again I searched the ground; but, as before, the eyes of the trapper proved better than mine.

'Hyur's a other billit-dux, young fellur,' said he, handing me the paper.

Another leaf from the missal!

I seized it eagerly—eagerly I devoured its contents! This time they were more brief:

'*Once more I open my veins. The council meets to-night. In a few hours it will be decided whose property I am—whose slave—whose—— Santissima Maria! I cannot write the word. I shall attempt to escape. They leave my hands free, but my limbs are tightly bound. I have tried to undo my fastenings, but cannot. O, if I but had a knife! I know where one is kept; I may contrive to seize it, but it must be in the last moment—it will not do to fail. Henri, I am firm and resolute; I do not yield to despair. One way or the other, I shall free myself from the hideous embrace of—— They come; the villain watches me; I must*'——

The writing ended abruptly. Her jailers had suddenly approached. The paper had evidently been concealed from them in haste; it had been crumpled up and flung upon the grass—for so was it when found.

* * * *

We remained for a while upon the spot, to rest and refresh our horses; the poor brutes needed both. There was water at the place, and that might not be met with again.

The sun was far down when we resumed our march—*our last march along the war-trail.*

TOADYISM OF GENIUS.

The grand era of literary flattery in England was in the early dawn of our literature; when readers, however courteous and gentle, were few in number, and a patron was the more necessary to an author for whom as yet there existed no public. Thus we find that Spenser, not satisfied with invoking the protection of his royal mistress for his poem, addressed with it a commendatory sonnet to each person of eminence to whom he presented a copy of the work. The *Faërie Queene* is inscribed (1596), both in prose and verse, to 'Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, and of Virginia, &c.'

O goddesse heavenly bright,
Mirrour of grace and majestie divine,
  Great ladie of the greatest isle, whose light,
  Like Phœbus' lampe, throughout the world doth shine.

To celebrate, without infringing on the claims of this 'goddesse,' the praises of her attendant nymphs, was a delicate task, which the poet performed, however, with great adroitness, in his sonnet to 'all the gratious and beautifull ladies in the court.'

The Chian peincter, when he was required
  To pourtraict Venus in her perfect hew;
To make his worke more absolute, desired
  Of all the fairest maides to have the vew:
Much more me needs, to draw the semblant trew
  Of beautie's queene, the world's sole wonderment,
To sharp my sence with sundry beauties vew,
  And steale from each some part of ornament.

Spenser did not pay his homage to the fair and the great unrewarded: Lord Grey of Wilton, his especial patron, when lord-lieutenant of Ireland, bestowed on the bard the secretaryship to government in that country, and a grant of 3028 acres of land, from the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond, near Cork.

The queen, indeed, dealt out her bounties more sparingly. 'There passeth a story,' wrote Dr Thomas Fuller in 1662, 'commonly told and believed, that Spenser presenting his poems to Queen Elizabeth, she, highly affected therewith, commanded the Lord Cecil [Burleigh], her treasurer, to give him an hundred pound; and when the treasurer (a good steward of the queen's money) alleged that sum was too much, "then give him," quoth the queen, "what is reason:" to which the lord consented, but was so busied, belike, about matters of higher concernment, that Spenser received no reward.'

The poet seems to lay a trembling hand on the lyre, when commending his verse to the grave 'Lord High Treasurer:'

> To you, right noble lord, whose careful brest
> To menage of most grave affaires is bent;
> And on whose mightie shoulders most doth reste
> The burdein of this kingdom's governement,
> As the wide compasse of the firmament
> On Atlas' mightie shoulders is upstayd;
> Unfitly I these ydle rimes present,
> The labor of lost time, and wit unstayd.

If poets are accused, not without reason, of giving unduly flattering titles, much allowance may be made for them, in their struggles to obtain some advantage from their productions, through private favour or patronage, in addition to the profits derivable from the liberality of 'the trade;' and it is only just to remark, that even sound divines have shewn no mean dexterity in the supple arts of dedication. A remarkable instance of this occurs in no less a work than Walton's Polyglot Bible. Walton, who was chaplain to Charles I., and a prebendary of St Paul's, having been deprived of his preferments on the outbreak of the Great Rebellion, found leisure, in those troubled times, for the commencement of his literary undertaking, and was encouraged in his task by the approbation of Cromwell. In the preface to the Polyglot, the author acknowledges the favours which he had received 'A Serenissimo D. Protectore, operis promovendi causâ,' &c. On the Restoration, however, Walton not only cancelled the praise which he had bestowed on his late republican patrons, but substituted some pretty sharp invectives against them: hence the distinction, well known to bibliographers, between the 'republican' and the 'loyal' copies of the Polyglot. Charles II. rewarded the loyalty of the author with the bishopric of Chester.

A proof of honest disinterestedness is presented in the refusal of Dryden to inscribe his *Æneid* to William III. It should be remembered that the pecuniary necessities of the bard were great, and that his age was one in which dedications bore golden fruit. Nor is his independence of conduct in this transaction the less vindicated, because 'the hero William' would not have given sixpence for the finest composition of the sort ever penned. Tonson, for ends of his own, exhausted every motive and inducement to persuade Dryden to dedicate his work to William, but in vain. The attempt on the part of the bookseller to dictate to the poet on this point was a manifest case of trespass on the patrimonial domain of authors.

Swift, who prefixed to his *Tale of a Tub* an 'Epistle Dedicatory to his Royal Highness Prince Posterity,' added a second, which might have afforded a profitable hint to Jacob Tonson:

'The Bookseller to the Right Hon. John Lord Somers.

'My Lord—Although the author has written a large dedication, yet, that being addressed to a prince whom I am never likely to have the honour of being known to; a person, besides, as far as I can observe, not at all regarded or thought on by any of our present writers; and being wholly free from that slavery which booksellers usually lie under to the caprice of authors; I think it a wise piece of presumption to inscribe these papers to your lordship, and to implore your lordship's protection of them. . . . Your lordship's name on the front, in capital letters, will at any time get off one edition; neither would I desire any other help to grow an alderman, than a patent for the sole privilege of dedicating to your lordship. I should now, in right of a dedicator, give your lordship a list of your own virtues, and at the same time be very unwilling to offend your modesty; but chiefly I should celebrate your liberality towards men of great parts and small fortunes, and give you broad hints that I mean myself. . . .'

It is no wonder that the fever of dedications, which was at its height during the reign of Queen Anne, experienced some abatement under the Hanoverian dynasty, which, at its outset, gave even less encouragement to polite letters and the fine arts than had been shewn by our Dutch ruler. With consummate candour, George II. said: 'I hate *boets* and *bainters*.' It is probable that the neat epigram of Dr Johnson on this sovereign was fully justified:

> Augustus still survives in Maro's strain,
> And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign;
> Great George's praise let tuneful Cibber sing,
> For nature formed the poet for the king.

Goldsmith has given, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, a lively picture of the abuses to which the dedication-system was still subject in his time. 'As I was meditating one day, in a coffee-house, on the fate of my paradoxes [it is young George Primrose who speaks], a little man, happening to enter the room, placed himself in the box before me, and, after some preliminary discourse, finding me to be a scholar, drew out a bundle of proposals, begging me to subscribe to a new edition he was going to give the world of Propertius, with notes. This demand necessarily produced a reply that I had no money; and that concession led him to inquire into the nature of my expectations. Finding that my expectations were just as great as my purse, "I see," said he, "you are unacquainted with the town; I'll teach you a part of it. Look at these proposals; upon these very proposals I have subsisted comfortably for twelve years. The moment a nobleman returns from his travels, a Creolian arrives from Jamaica, or a dowager from her country-seat, I strike for a subscription. I first besiege their hearts with flattery, and then pour in my proposals at the breach. If they subscribe readily the first time, I renew my request for a dedication-fee. If they let me have that, I smite them once more for engraving their coat-of-arms at the top."'

It is with a good grace that Goldsmith ridicules the devices of parasites and flatterers. Himself above sordid calculations, instead of seeking a patron among the wealthy or noble, he followed the dictates of his affections, by inscribing the work which first gained him distinction to his brother—'a man who, despising fame and fortune, had retired early to happiness and obscurity, on an income of forty pounds a year.'*

A grave rebuke to the toadyism of authors and the vanity of patrons is administered by Johnson in his manly letter to the Earl of Chesterfield:

'Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

'Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing to a patron that which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.'

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* Goldsmith's dedication to *The Traveller*.

We must not expect that even in times of 'literature for the million,' the favour of a 'discerning public' will entirely supersede the pursuit of particular patronage. The writer of this article remembers being told by the poet Campbell that he had regretted through life the mistake which,

> In the fire of his youthful emotion,

he committed, by dedicating the *Pleasures of Hope* to a mere personal friend, 'who could do him no good.' On the whole, however, it is matter of congratulation that the dedicatory effusions of our own days are, in great measure, shorn of the servility which marked those of past ages; while, on the contrary, the sister-art of puffing by advertisement, in the hands of modern practitioners, has attained a degree of luxuriance eclipsing the efforts in that line of all former generations.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

One of the important matters talked about during the past month, was Mr Allan's interview with the Emperor of the French to exhibit an electro-magnetic machine, which, if rumour may be relied on, will do real work, and avoid the defects of machines which have preceded it. Although the result, however, is said to be satisfactory, as we have not yet been made acquainted with particulars, we are unable to describe the merits of the contrivance. Meanwhile, the question has been considered at a meeting of the Civil Engineers, in Mr Robert Hunt's paper 'On the Application of Electro-magnetism as a Motive Power.' It was treated comprehensively, and reasons were given why the attempts hitherto made have failed. Engines acting by a direct pull will not answer, because the iron, under the repeated blows it receives, alters in character, until in time it becomes something like steel, and then retains an amount of permanent magnetism. Hence it was that Jacobi of St Petersburg set himself to find a way of producing an immediate rotatory motion, and constructed an electro-magnetic machine which propelled a boat laden with passengers about three miles an hour on the Neva; but nothing came of it, owing to heavy cost and other difficulties. Mr Hunt explains what these difficulties are; shews how one magnet will counteract the other, and that 'as the speed of the engine increases, there is curiously a corresponding diminution of available mechanical power; a falling off in the *duty* of the engine as the rotations become more rapid.' Moreover, there remains the important consideration, that to produce mechanical force of any kind, there must be a change of form in the matter producing. In the case of electro-magnetism, the zinc employed in the batteries is the element that undergoes the change; and it has been proved by experiment that six grains of carbon in the fuel produce a motive power equal to thirty-two grains of zinc in the battery, and that, under the best possible conditions, an equal result would be secured by the combustion of six pounds of anthracite coal—the most carbonaceous fuel—as by the conversion in the battery of thirty-two pounds of zinc into oxide. Another way of putting the case is, that the thirty-two pounds of zinc burnt in the furnace will develop precisely the same quantity of heat as that which would be obtained from burning six pounds of coal in the same furnace. Whether producing heat during combustion, or electricity during chemical change, the mechanical force obtained is precisely the same. Hence the commercial question of cost is greatly in favour of steam, and adverse to the use of electricity as a motive power.' There is no doubt that endeavours after really useful electro-magnetic engines will occupy the heads and hands of inventors and machinists for many a year to come. The question is one that will not be given up until some practical solution has been arrived at; and the amateur and scientific investigator will be alike benefited by the publication of trustworthy data.

Chief among things talked about are the Art Treasures Exhibition; the great Handel festival which is to be held at the Crystal Palace; the Great Eastern steam-ship which is to be launched next August; and the telegraph cable, of which many miles are twisted every week at Greenwich, for submersion in the Atlantic. With respect to this last, opinions have been expressed that the manufacture of submarine telegraph cables is open to considerable improvement, and that the only way to insure durability is to have stout iron wires for the core instead of thin copper ones. Such a cable, it is said, could be twisted for L.70 a mile. There is some talk of a new company to carry out the improvement, if such it be, the project being an under-sea line to the Azores, and thence to Halifax. For England, one uniform rate is proposed of a shilling per message. This system is found to answer well in Switzerland, where any ordinary message can be sent to any part of the country for a franc, and we see no reason why it should not answer here. Let the public but once feel assured of promptitude and secrecy, as well as cheapness, and they will not be slow to avail themselves of the advantages of instantaneous communication. Proof exists in the fact, that on the last Saturday of March, while the elections were in progress, 3000 messages were received at the telegraph offices in the Strand and Lothbury, and the country offices were busier than ever. Then look at Canada—500,000 messages were flashed along the line passing through Montreal in 1856.

Let us mention, while on the subject of communications, that 478,000,000 letters passed through the Post-office in 1856. The number is astounding; but it is published by the Duke of Argyle, Post-master General, in his Report for last year. It is an increase of 22,000,000 over 1855. In 1839, the number of letters was 76,000,000; and there were certain prophets at that time who foretold that penny-postage would never answer. What do they say now? And last year a sum of more than L.11,000,000 sterling was sent by Post-office orders. With these results before us, we are glad to notice that the name of Rowland Hill appears in the list of the fifteen candidates selected by the council of the Royal Society for admission into that learned corporation. Mr Grote is another; Mr Whitworth another; Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, another. The total number of candidates this year is forty-two.

The new Reading-room of the British Museum, having been thrown open for a week to everybody, is now resorted to by the habitual readers and students, and by not a few new ones; for the comfort and conveniences of the room are so great, that numbers will now be attracted who wish to gratify curiosity without undergoing the hardships of the old room. One very gratifying fact remains to be noticed: it is, that up to letter G there will henceforth be but one catalogue instead of two; so that a student looking into that one will be sure to find whatever the library contains under the several initials. The lower edges of the volumes of the catalogue—and numerous they are!—are shod with iron, to prevent wear and tear.

The president of the Geographical Society, in his anniversary address, pronounced an *éloge* on Dr Kane, whose name, as our readers will remember, was made famous through arctic discovery and adventure, and whose untimely death occurred but a few months ago. In the same address, particulars were given of the exploration, which, as we intimated, is about to be undertaken to discover, if possible, by one last effort, the fate of the long-lost Franklin expedition. Lady Franklin has purchased the *Fox* screw-yacht, aided by much sympathy and generous subscriptions; and as Captain M'Clintock is to have the command, we may be sure that all that human skill and endurance can do to reveal the dread secret will be done. May success attend the effort, though it be but to disclose a tale of disaster, privation, and death.

Seeing that we were threatened with the importation of a murrain from Northern Europe, the Royal Agricultural Society, in co-operation with the Agricultural Societies of Scotland and Ireland, have sent Professor Simonds, a competent veterinarian, accompanied by a German *aide-de-langue*, to examine into the nature of the disease on the continent, and gather all possible information respecting it. It is again repeated in communications to the Society, that the only way of preventing potato disease is to plant *whole* tubers. And Professor Way shews how to distinguish between sound and unsound potatoes, even when no difference is perceptible to the eye. Put a slice from each suspected lot into separate portions of new milk, each about a quarter of a pint, which is to be kept warm for three or four hours. The milk containing sound slices remains unaltered, while the rest is curdled.

To some people, a notice of a new star is now scarcely more interesting than a paragraph concerning a big gooseberry; we, however, think it worth while to mention that another little planet, the forty-third, has been discovered by one of the observers at the Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford.—Another interesting astronomical fact is that, within the past few weeks, there has been a reappearance of spots on the sun. It is interesting, because it tends to confirm the theory which associates the phenomena of terrestrial magnetism with solar spots. The phenomena, as we have more than once explained, go through their various manifestations from maximum to minimum in a period of ten years; the sun-spots do the same; and the more spots, the more marked the phenomena. Last year scarcely a spot was observed, and now that spots begin once more to shew themselves, the attention of astronomers has been called to the fact by no less an authority than Sir John Herschel, in order that complete series of observations may be made with a view to test the theory. Considering that meteorological effects, and consequently health and agriculture, may depend on these phenomena, we think them worthy the attention of others as well as scientific observers.—We record an aid appended to the promotion of astronomical science. A munificent lady at Albany, state of New York, has given funds to establish an observatory in that city. To perpetuate her fame, it is named the Dudley Observatory. An addition recently made to its appliances by purchase, is Mr Scheutz's calculating-machine, which, as we noticed when it was exhibited in London three years ago, calculates and stereotypes astronomical tables by the turning of a winch.—Some weak-minded people are again in fear of the earth's collision with a comet, as if Arago had not settled that question long ago.

Mr M'Donald, assistant-surgeon to the surveying expedition under Captain Denham, in the Pacific, has sent a description of the so-called 'sea-sawdust' to the Royal Society. Having had several opportunities of examining this curious production, he pronounces it as belonging to the *Oscillatoridæ*. The specimens were found to consist of minute filaments adhering in little bundles, with globules of air between, which account for the buoyancy. 'Although,' he says, 'their abiding-place is the open ocean, their habit can scarcely be regarded as very different from that of those species which flourish in damp localities exposed to the atmosphere.'

Another paper, communicated to the Royal Society by Dr Edward Smith, is of especial interest. It is on the quantities of air breathed under different circumstances during certain periods, extending in many instances to twenty-four hours. It is so difficult to breathe normally with any apparatus fixed over the mouth, that former experiments of this kind have rarely been carried on for more than a quarter-hour continuously: hence the value of the results obtained by Dr Smith. He has now ascertained what quantities of air are breathed while lying down—on waking in the morning—on getting up—after breakfast—while walking—before and after dinner, and the other meals—the effect of different kinds of food and liquids—of riding outside or inside an omnibus—on horseback—going up or down stairs—and on the tread-mill. He has made all the experiments on his own person, and with an apparatus so constructed as to insure accuracy. The subject is one fraught with important consequences, and deserving of careful consideration. For the present, we content ourselves with this brief notice; but we hope to return to the subject with full particulars on some future occasion.

Professor Piazzi Smyth has just communicated to the Royal Scottish Society of Arts an account of experiments made during his voyage to Teneriffe, in taking astronomical observations with a telescope at sea. The difficulty, as will be obvious to every one, has always been the rolling and pitching of the ship, whereby observer and instrument are alike rendered unsteady. To overcome it, the professor invented a balanced frame, with free axes of rotation, somewhat on the principle of the gyroscope, which, when the wheel is kept in rapid motion, remains uninfluenced by the most violent movements of the ship. Having demonstrated his theory on a small scale, he had a frame made large enough to carry instrument and observer. It was placed on the deck of the yacht near the stern; sailors were set to work the driving-wheels, and when they got up to eighty revolutions in a second, the professor says: 'I had the satisfaction, for the first time that any one had had, of looking at sea through a telescope steadied by the same mechanical effort as that which preserves the constancy of the earth's axis in space. I soon ascertained that in spite of the egregious rolling of the yacht, which must be partaken of by the observer, but is happily not partaken of by a telescope mounted as ours, there is no difficulty in keeping the eye *en rapport* with the eye-piece.... Having brought the horizon of the sea into the field of view, I was delighted to find it remain there absolutely uninfluenced by the rolling and pitching of the yacht; nay, it even remained bisected on the wire sufficiently long for the captain, the first and second mates, and several of the sailors, to look in and bear witness of the fact. They saw this consummation long desired at sea, and they took kindly to the instrument, though it was an innovation on nautical practice.'

The importance of this invention to navigation can hardly be overrated. After long-continued gales, it sometimes happens that the mariner can only ascertain his true position, or check the rate of his chronometers, by observations of the stars, or an eclipse of one of Jupiter's moons. With Professor Smyth's apparatus, the observations can be taken as accurately as on shore. He himself was about to observe an eclipse of one of the Jovian satellites, when the sailors, by working too eagerly, broke the handle of the driving-wheel. We hope to see the subject taken up by the Admiralty, and practically carried out in the navy; and, as was said by the chairman of the meeting at which the paper was read, 'If her Majesty had occasion to take a voyage in rough weather, she could not have a greater favour conferred upon her than a seat mounted as Professor Smyth had described, unmoved by the agitation of the waves, and in perfect repose amidst the fury of the tempest.'

We call attention to Mr Niven's paper, brought before the same Scottish Society, 'On the Manufacture of Ropes and Paper from the Stem of the Hollyhock.' This plant produces a great quantity of available fibre, which can be broken down and prepared for pulp by any of the usual methods. It grows from eight to ten feet high under ordinary circumstances, and produces numerous stems as it advances in age. An acre of hollyhocks would yield from three to five tons of fibre fit for ropes, or fifteen tons from which paper could be made. And, as Mr Niven states, 'when the crop requires renewal, the roots, which contain a large amount of farina, should be bruised in the manner of making starch from the potato, and the fibre left is at once suited for the fabrication of a quality of paper stronger even than that which can be produced from the stems, the farina being also available either as a substitute for starch or food for animals. It is also known that the hollyhock contains a large amount of colouring matter, which, being little inferior to indigo, might be extracted, and thus the whole plant appropriated to useful purposes.'

The government of New Zealand have set apart a sum of L.4000 to found prizes for inventions by which the hemp and other fibrous plants of that island may be wrought into articles of commerce. The first person who shall by any means or contrivance of his own manufacture 100 tons of merchandise from the *Phormium tenax*, or other native plants, is to have L.2000. To the second, L.1000 will be awarded; and the first five who, under the same condition, produce 25 tons of merchandise, will receive L.150 each.

By a vote of the colonial parliament, the decimal system of money is to be adopted in Canada. A report on the question, as regards England, has just been published by Lord Overstone. At a late meeting of the Geographical Society of Paris, the gold medal was awarded to Dr Livingstone; and a communication was read shewing how to carry on trade from Algeria to Senegal by way of Timbuctoo.

BENEFIT AND SICK CLUBS.

A tract on this subject has been published at Sheffield, by Mr Charles Hamilton, which challenges attention. An important subject it truly is; since the members of such societies, including Odd Fellows, Foresters, Druids, Rechabites, Shepherds, &c., number more than three millions and a half of the population of England, and contribute four millions and a half to their funds, which sometimes amount in the aggregate to upwards of twelve millions sterling. The majority, however, of those apparently flourishing Benefit Societies are at this moment, according to Mr Hamilton, *insolvent*. But that need not hinder them from going on for a term of years yet; although the final crash, supposing no energetic steps be taken to avert it, is inevitable. Between 1795 and 1836—forty-one years—14,375 clubs broke for want of funds; and they were then re-established on the very same system of construction and management! The main cause of the mischief is the unfair and childishly absurd plan of average payments. In insurance-offices, on lives from 25 to 60, the premiums range from about L.2, 2s. to L.7; but in these *benefit* clubs, where the claims accruing increase with age, just as in the other the man of 25 and the man of 60 pays the same sum. A few of the clubs have corrected this folly; but in most of the other cases where the evil has been observed at all, the only step taken in the way of obviating it is—to refuse to receive members beyond the age of 45! One half the existing clubs are illegal, because their rules and tables have not been prepared by an actuary, although the cost of this is trifling. As for the legal enrolling of the society, that does not now cost one farthing. In fine, cheapness is the error and the danger of most of the clubs, but cheapness combined with wild and dangerous extravagance; because, as they had their origin in convivial and bacchanalian meetings of former times, so in our day the office of the club and the rendezvous of its members is the *public-house*.

THE SONG OF THE MOUNTAIN STREAM.

List to the song of the mountain stream,
From its old rocky chamber springing;
Hailing the earliest morning gleam,
With its frolicking—sparkling—singing!
'Oh, tis a glorious thing to bound
Through a world of such wondrous beauty;
The flowers are breathing sweet odours around,
And hark! the old woods with gay music resound:
Pleasure is glancing,
Sunbeams are dancing,
Life is a boon, and enjoyment a duty!'

List to the song of the mountain stream,
As its murmurs are gently swelling,
Bounding along with its noontide theme,
Of the glory of labour telling.
'I'll water the land, and cool the breeze,
And set the young grass blades growing;
I'll creep round the roots of the old oak-trees,
And call to the cattle their thirst to appease.
Lambs shall come skipping,
Birds shall stoop sipping;
All shall be glad for my pure limpid flowing.'

List to the song of the mountain stream,
As it rolls with its heaving motion,
Calmly reflecting the sun's last beam,
Ere it loses itself in the ocean.
'No more through the beautiful vale I'll wend;
I have finished life's changeful story;
Peacefully—thankfully seeking the end,
Where with the main, my small tribute shall blend,
Mingling—not dying,
Smiling—not sighing,
Singing for ever *His* greatness and glory.' E. F. M.

'CAPTAIN DODD AT SEA.'

The writer of this article has fallen into a ludicrous mistake in stating that the Mr Weld, who accompanied Captain Dodd, was the present secretary of the Royal Society—who was not yet born at the time. The real Simon Pure was his half-brother, Mr Isaac Weld, nearly fifty years his senior; the father having been twice married—once when very young, and again in advanced age. Mr Isaac Weld was the author of the well-known *Travels in America*; but the narrative of Captain Dodd's voyage was written by Mr C. R. Weld.

PAUPERS FOR SALE.

We mentioned, a few days since, the custom of receiving bids for keeping the public paupers which prevailed in some parts of New Jersey. We were not then aware that in some parts of New England—that land of schools and Puritans—the same custom prevailed. In Rhode Island and Vermont, the poor of some towns may annually be seen at 'the auction-block,' to be struck off to the lowest bidder, who thinks he can either get some little compensating work out of them, or feed them on the refuse of his table, and many times on that which he never thought fit to be brought into his house. It is not a year since some of the papers of Rhode Island and Vermont called attention to some outrageous abuses in this matter. Would it not be well for some of our New-England orators to take measures for preventing the sale at auction of some of the mothers of New England?—*New York Tribune* of June 10, 1853. [The system is still kept up. —*European.*]

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PICNICS.

This is not a pretty word, by any means, nor, so far as I know, a very expressive one; and yet, what pleasant memories it awakens. As I never can see a hearse, with red-nosed driver, and all the paraphernalia of simulated sorrow—sadder to think upon than even that heavy vacant burden within—without my mind reverting at once to the thoughtless merry time when I was school-boy, and managed to be present at a certain Derby, by paying half-a-crown for the privilege of clinging to a funeral plume; as I never smell a herring, fresh or otherwise, but the waving woods of Inverary, and the long blue waters of Loch Fyne, pass before me like a dissolving view, with all their summer prime of youth and pleasure; so, at this word picnic, formed of two ill-assorted monosyllables, I hear the distant murmur of the seas, and the hurry of shadowy rivers, and the trumpets of the bees upon moorlands, and the whisper of autumn woods, with the voices and the laughter of those I love, ringing, year behind year, through all. There are but few touchstones of our poor human hearts which can elicit any past remembrance wholly without pain; but I think this simple word, that is born of pleasure, and nicknamed in drollery, is one: poverty, ill-humour, illness, all things that deform or imbitter our existences, are forgotten in the sound. Care, it is said, killed a cat; but I never heard of its having hurt a picnic: otherwise, the salt would not be left behind so often. Mirth—if he travels even in the hamper with the bottles—is sure to be there; love, who is very light and portable, is carried by the ladies; appetite, like charity, never faileth; and digestion—well, digestion sometimes comes to a picnic a little late, in consequence of having been obliged to go back for the dinner-pills.

I have sat at rich men's feasts, which were partaken of in the open air, whereat powdered footmen have waited upon us decorously, and a bishop said grace; where every one had a cushion to sit upon, and a napkin folded upon his plate: but I scarcely call that picnicking. And I have taken my repast—brown bread, and eggs and onions, with a flask of the most ordinary wine—outside Disentis, in the valley of the Grisons, and ate it upon the hillside by myself, because the town, and the inn, and the people all smelt so execrably: but I don't consider that a picnic either. I have been one of a party of three hundred, whose various contributions to the common stock have been decided upon three weeks before the day of meeting, at a lottery, wherein mustard, and bread, and pepper were the prizes; where there were two military bands to dance to, under a thousand Chinese lanterns; where champagne corks went off like platoon-firing; and where it took half an American lake to ice the wine. And I have joined mighty pleasure-companies of the people, where everybody kept his food in his pocket-handkerchief; and having cut it up with clasp-knives, and devoured it, seized everybody else's hands, and ran down grassy hills at speed; but these things, too, I consider foreign to the picnic, which seems, somehow, to signify something snug and well selected, and quite at variance with monster-meetings of any sort.

A picnic should be composed principally of young men and young women; but two or three old male folks may be admitted, if *very* good-humoured; a few pleasant children; and one—only one, dear old lady: to her let the whole commissariat department be intrusted by the entire assembly beforehand; and give her the utmost powers of a dictatress, for so shall nothing we want be left at home. It is not 'fun' to find one's self without mint-sauce to his cold lamb; nobody, who is properly constituted, enjoys lobster without fresh butter; and when you are fond of salad, it is not cheerful to find the bottle of dressing, which was intrusted to young Master Brown, has broken in his filthy pocket: these things all occur, unless we have our (one) dear old lady. Who else would have seen to that hamper of glass being packed with such consummate judgment? Who else would have brought the plate—I confess I dislike steel forks—in her own private bag? Who else could have so piled tart upon tart without a crack or a cranny for the rich red juice to well through? Who else has the art of preserving Devonshire cream in a can? Observe her little bottle of cayenne-pepper! Mark each individual cruet as it gleams forth from its separate receptacle! Look at the salt-box!—look at the corkscrew! Bless her dear old heart! she has forgotten nothing. However humble the meal, let it be complete; and it can't be complete without its (one) dear old lady.

The girl with the prettiest hands will be generally found—in accordance with the eternal fitness of things—concocting the claret cup; the young man—the one young man, who should have the sole charge of the bottle-department—and who must not be her lover—assisting her. Lemonade and claret is the best mixture for ladies, if you have no 'cup;' and beer, remember, in stone-bottles is almost always flat. Let there be plenty of railway-wrappers to sit and loll upon; for in most of nature's *salles à manger*, and by the sea-coast especially, the seats and couches are hard, and at times damp. I had the mark of a plum-pudding stone—which I was not born with, but which I thought I should carry to my grave—most firmly impressed upon me, until quite lately, the consequence of an open-air entertainment in the beginning of last autumn. If there is the slightest chance of people being dull, take the last new poem (I have heard better criticism again and again, *sub Jove*, than that of the weekly dispensers of immortality), take a flute—a cornet, if there is an echo—take a sketch-book or two, for they often suggest, and never interrupt conversation; and, if the company be very larkey, and rather unintellectual, take the Racing Game, or a pack of cards. Don't be too polite, for drawing-room manners are out of place at a picnic; but do your very best, either in carving the chicken, or in saying good things, according to your gifts. And, by-the-by, if there is anything forgotten, after all, don't send the most amusing person you've got back for it, because he is the youngest or the poorest; for that, as the mathematicians say, is a great waste of power; but let the stout, rich party go instead, who is as much out of his element among you as an aide-de-camp at church. If you are by the seaside, be very careful not to break the bottles; for when they are empty and well-corked, they swim in the water capitally, and afford excellent objects for pebble-throwing to both sexes. If there be any servants, drivers, or boatmen, don't forget that they appreciate having the things left for them unhacked and tolerably neat; and if they take your places, don't put everything of value out of sight, as though you were afraid of some condidlement. Let the gentlemen withdraw themselves, after dinner, from the weaker vessels who can't stand smoke, and enjoy their cigars; the (one) dear old lady, aided by her obedient and neat-handed Phillises will, during that period, be putting the crockery back again, and the plate into her private bag; and that will be the time, also, you will be remarked upon if you have monopolised the most comfortable place during the meal, or have spoiled a dress through clumsiness, or have been eating rapidly in order to secure two helps of cream.

It is now, when the glory of landscape or of ocean stretches before you, and your every sense is satisfied, that you must feel, if ever, benevolence towards the whole human race, friendship for those present, and love for one (at least) of them; it is the period for affectionate thought and conversation; the time

> To glance from theme to theme,
> Discuss the books to love or hate,
> To touch the changes of the state,
> Or thread some deep Socratic dream.

How well the poet, from whom these words are borrowed, has understood this matter, he and his beloved friend, who found the shadows of the wych-elms and the towering sycamore so fair after the dust, and din, and steam of town; who, bearing all that weight of learning lightly, like a flower, brought an eye for all he saw, and mixed in all the simple outdoor gambols; who fed both heart and ear of the charmed circle, as they lay and listened to his reading, on the lawn; who loved himself to listen while the maiden flung her ballad to the brightening moon, the while the stream ran on, the wine-flask lying couched in moss, or cooled within its glooming wave; and last, returning from afar, before the crimson-circled star had fallen into her father's grave, and brushing ankle-deep in flowers, they heard behind the woodbine veil the milk that bubbled in the pail, and buzzings of the honeyed hours; they went home—that is to say, to tea, wherein they shewed their wisdom.

My own first recollections of a course of picnics are derived from those, in my boyhood, held at Cliefden Spring, upon the river Thames, near Maidenhead. I was then an Eton boy, and my family living in that vicinity, some half-a-dozen of my schoolfellows, or so, good oars, and most of them good voices, would often row up and spend the day with us at home. Saints' days were blessed days in those times. Up the fair broad river in a six-oar, with nothing on to speak of, was fine travelling upon an early summer morning; the right royal castle looking down upon us from afar, the flat green meadows upon this side, and the osier-banks on that, and the little wooded islands in the midst, so gallantly stemming the tide. Here we delayed to bathe, and there to beer; here, where the tow-rope took off our straw-hats, to chaff and counter-chaff the bargemen, and there to put our flannel shirts on decently before the ladies met us at the old gray bridge; then, on with our fair burden, through the locks wherein, as the boat sank with the sinking waters, we sang our glees; and again delayed by the wet clinging lilies, which were woven into chaplets—bless the weavers' innocent hearts—for our young brows; and by the swans delayed, which, as we neared their nests among the reeds, flapped out on mighty wings, and hissed their fiercest. So we reached Cliefden Spring, beneath the hanging woods of Cliefden, and by the river's side. What appetites we brought then to those feasts! what merriment! ah me, what youth!

I remember one young after-dinner boaster of us, who, speaking of the great walks thereabouts, observed that they were nothing compared to the extent of those about his place at home. 'There's one, a gravel one,' he said, 'that you may walk ten miles upon and never leave it.' The ladies blushed and smiled. We boys, with swollen cheeks, remarked: 'O yes,' and 'we should rather like to see it;' but one, who was the wisest of us, winked and said: 'Ah, Longbow Major means ten miles *backwards and forwards;*' at which we laughed the laugh of those blithe days.

I have picnicked for almost a summer long amongst the Channel Islands; and there are no better places for this pleasantry than there. There is a certain ivy-mantled, wood-surrounded tower in Jersey, from which almost the entire island, the whole great STATE—which coins its own half-pennies—can be surveyed. The tiny roads that thread it in and out, shut in by honeysuckle hedges; the avenues that lead to the old seigneuries; the small green valleys, where the beautiful cattle feed; the mighty ruined castle by the sea: you may sit and see it all from the tower, smoking your great penny cigar, after your good bottle of claret at 1s. 9d., after your peerless Jersey lobsters, your unexcelled green figs, your peach unrivalled, and your sanspareil pear. Or will you prefer Grève au l'Anchon (of sand-eels), where the white sand sparkles for such a distance eastward, and the forsaken pools are like mirrors; where the mighty caverns will shelter you from the sun, and the spring-water leaps from the rock to mix with that brandy which is so cheap, and not British? Or, again, will you choose the tremendous headland, Grosnez, that juts out nose-like into the ocean, almost close under which the low coast of France seems to smile invitingly, whither those exiles yonder are straining their eager eyes? We have dined in these fair spots as merrily as anywhere, and amongst pleasant Jersey faces, as kindly as any in broad Britain. Ah! happy island-days! our canopy, the sky without a cloud; our banquet-hall, the cliffs above the sunlit sea!

Lastly, omitting many a forest-meal, and many a spread upon the ruined ramparts of the Dane and Roman, in shells of ancient castles and upon decks of yachts at sea, let me recall one picnic more. From where I sit and write—between the oaks and across the little harbour with its angry bar—I see the very place where we, we thirteen, dined; upon the beach yonder in the fifth cove of the red cliff-bound bay. You cannot pass to it by land save at mid-tide and after, because of these four headlands which reach so far into the sea. Starting at half ebb, therefore, we took boat and sailed thither, determining to walk home round the points. The sandy bay we had chosen for debarkation was so flat that the boat could not come in, and we chivalrous men had to get out and drag it and the ladies high and dry. There was a mighty archway, cut by that laborious handicraftsman Ocean, through which the beautiful village we had lately left, the wooded cliffs beyond it, and the channel-stream with white-sailed ships, were seen as in a picture; in the foreground, too, was a mighty fallen fragment, resembling, almost minutely, that statue, brave and pitiful, of the Dying Gladiator—nature, as it really seemed, playing the painter and the sculptor, and putting both arts to shame. The sketch-books were produced of course, at once, and it was decided here to dine. There was a doubt amongst the superstitious whether we should not ask the old boatman to make us up fourteen; but finally, he was paid and sent away. 'Be sure, gents,' were his last words, 'not to start later than four o'clock; and even then you'll get your feet wet round the last point, perhaps.' And the 'gents,' thinking he only wanted to frighten them, and get another job, replied: 'O yes, bother the time!' as though ten minutes' unpunctuality in the matter would not have been our death-doom, with the spring-tide rising thirty feet, and we shut out from life by a sheer wall of cliff which rose five hundred. We laughed and talked, drew and painted, climbed rocks, explored caverns, and dined; the time flying on at average picnic speed, and even quicker. There wanted but a quarter to the fatal hour, and there was not a thing packed up; the most philosophic of our party, too, had only just lit his second cigar, over which he was accustomed to form his judgment upon all things, and we did not dare disturb him. It was five minutes past the hour when we all started, slow and hamper-laden, for home. By skipping round the first point from stone to stone, we managed to clear it dry shod, but the tide was coming in apace, we saw, and I heard somebody say, in a hollow voice, that something would come of our having been thirteen at dinner. Round the next we had to wade knee-deep, and carry the ladies pick-a-back. We ran on over the intervening sand at full speed, and quite silently, for we knew our case was getting very hazardous, and found at the third point the water was up to our waists. There was but one promontory more, and that once rounded, we knew that we should be in safety. We *must* effect that passage, for, as we were well aware, we were cut off by the remorseless waves from all retreat—even to that strip of beach where we had dined, and where, indeed, the surrounding rocks were just as precipitous as elsewhere. We found the tide at the last point six feet in, at least, and quite unfordable. A look of unutterable horror stole over every face; the philosopher dropped his hamper of crockery with a tremendous crash upon the shingle. 'It's no use my bothering myself with *that* any further, at all events.' No statement, however solemn, not even 'this all comes of our having been thirteen at dinner,' which here again tolled forth, could have had a more awful effect upon us than this, for we knew that he had had his second cigar, and that his judgment was perfected. There was a little rock some twelve feet in the sea, which would not be covered over for an hour perhaps, and thither, with mournful hearts, we waded, to eke our lives out by that scanty space. I, too, had a good mind to let that heavy young person whom I had hitherto supported on my shoulders get there unassisted, as she was only going to be kept dry for so short a time: it was very lucky that my good-nature prevailed, for behind the rock lay our good old boatman in his wherry, concealed and laughing to himself. 'Ah, I thought you'd get your feet wet round the point, gents, so I just waited here, in case you might want me.' The heavy young person threw her arms about him there and then, and kissed him; and for my part, I shall not forget him either, nor that spring-tide autumn picnic, although the mark of the plum-pudding stone has, as I have said, by this time paled away.

PAST AND PRESENT OF INDIA.

So far as our eastern territories are concerned, we may well exclaim: *Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.* The type of the old-school nabob has almost completely disappeared from our comedies and romances; there are few families without some friend or relative in India, and from him they discover that every individual who has sojourned in that country for any length of time, is not invariably an eccentric old bachelor, imperious in manner and munificent in ideas, with a yellow face, a liverless body, and pockets full of gold. Except a tinge of bronze in the complexion, and an unusual consumption of pale ale and cayenne, there is little to distinguish the East Indian of the present day from his brother who lives at home at ease. The cheap rate of postal charges for forwarding books and periodicals, has enabled him to keep himself acquainted with the current topics of the day; the shortness of the overland route, compared with the old circuitous voyage, brings him home to re-Europeanise himself before he has become confirmed in the habits and tastes which the climate and custom of the country induce.

We generally find the conquerors of any country adopting many of the customs of the original inhabitants, whom they affect to despise and dislike. In this way the Mohammedans of Hindostan have fallen into many Hindoo prejudices, particularly in matters of eating and purification; for which they are stigmatised as latitudinarians and heretics by their orthodox brethren of El Hejaz. In former days, the unhappy individual who went into voluntary exile in India, finding himself deprived of European society, and without books or intellectual occupation of any kind, gradually subsided into native habits and amusements. Few had strength of mind to resist the opportunities afforded them of amassing a large fortune by the most corrupt practices. Commanding officers drew the pay of a number of paper-men, as they were termed, who existed only on their own muster-rolls; promotion was sold to the highest bidder, and the lawsuit decided in favour of whoever gave the largest bribe. It will readily be believed that such a state of things caused a low standard of morality; but it can hardly be credited that any one born of Christian parents, in a Christian land, could so far forget his country and his God, as to conform to the degrading practices and tenets of paganism. Nevertheless, on the top of a hill near Saugur cantonment, may still be seen the remains of a temple, built by a late field-officer of the Bengal army, known by the name of 'Hindoo Stewart,' and endowed by him with a sufficient sum to maintain the officiating Brahmins. He dressed completely in native fashion, even to his hair, which he allowed to grow long, and turned up behind with a comb; he never ate any kind of animal food, nor would he touch his ordinary diet unless assured that it had been prepared by a person of good caste; he daily went to the ghaut, and performed the ablutions and devotions enjoined in the institutes of Menu, the great Gentoo authority in matters of faith. Thus he lived, and thus he died; and those natives who had courted and flattered him for the sake of what they could extract from his purse, shewed their contempt for the memory of the renegade by destroying after his death anything that might serve to perpetuate it, even though it were a temple constructed for their own impure worship.

Since that time, the order of things is reversed; instead of the European lowering himself to the level of the native, the latter endeavours to raise himself in the social scale by adopting civilised habits and conforming to European ideas. Many of the higher classes dress and entertain in the English fashion. When they ask you to their house, everything at table is cooked and served in French style; and though they will not eat with you, they will ask you to take wine, filling their own glass with water. Natives of all classes take their passage in the fire-boat, or their ticket in the *smoke-drag*,* without being considered guilty of impiety in committing themselves to that machine worked by magic, and made by evil spirits. A screw-steamer is even still rather a severe trial of their feelings, the motive-power being invisible. However, as this kind of vessel is not found suited to river-navigation, their fortitude is seldom put to the test in that way. Natives avail themselves largely of the electric telegraph; suttee and female infanticide are nearly abolished; education is making great strides—there are commissioners of education, boards of education, colleges and schools scattered all over the country.

The tawny students in these aspiring institutions can recite Milton and spout Shakspeare, though they know not the difference between latitude and longitude, and cross the *pons asinorum* before treading the beaten path of common addition and vulgar fractions. Probably *Paradise Lost* and geometry will never be of more practical use to them than Mrs Jellaby's warm flannel-vests and moral pocket-handkerchiefs were to the young niggers of Borrioboolagha; nevertheless, the memory is exercised, the mind enlarged, some information communicated, and means furnished for obtaining more, through a knowledge of the English language, as the native literature is very limited, and the little there is, anything but instructive or improving. Such progress has been made in this respect, that a native gentleman at either of the three presidencies would consider it an insult to be addressed in his native language, of which he makes no more use in polite society than the Poles and Irish do of theirs.

England has been making a steady and gradual advance since the days of our great-grandsires; but though her national debt has increased enormously, neither her standing army nor territories have increased in proportion, for while she has gained in the east, she has lost in the west. What is her progress compared with that of India? Exactly one hundred years have elapsed since the tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta was enacted, when, of the handful of Europeans who represented Great Britain in the now flourishing City of Palaces, 123 perished miserably in a single night. Though not a vestige now remains of the old fort which they held for three days against 70,000 native troops, or of the dungeon where they were foully murdered—even the obelisk erected to their memory has disappeared—still the tale of their gallantry and sufferings is familiar to all, and has even passed into a proverb.

At that time (1756), the Company of merchants trading to the East Indies did not hold the anomalous position which the merchant-princes of Leadenhall Street now do; they were simply a mercantile community holding a monopoly of all trade to the eastward of the Cape, and having for this purpose some seven or eight stations on the eastern and western coasts of India. Small forts were built for the protection of each factory, and a grant of land attached to it, possession of which was not always obtained in the most honest or straightforward manner. Territory there was none; the whole of the Company's possessions put together would not make a single zillah or district of the present day. Their minds being chiefly bent on amassing wealth, they had neither the will nor the power to commit acts of aggression, but retained, for the defence of their factories, a limited number of mercenary soldiers, chiefly composed of European adventurers and low-caste natives. There was no standing army, and only two regiments in the Company's service claim to be a century old, and even these are doubtful.

At the present time, the Company's territories extend with little interruption, over 27 degrees of latitude and 29 degrees of longitude, covering an area of nearly one million square miles. The additions made within the last ten years alone contain forty millions of inhabitants—an amount considerably exceeding the entire population of Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands.

Besides 4 cavalry and 22 infantry regiments of Her Majesty serving on the Indian establishment, which are paid by the Company, their standing army at present consists of 5 brigades horse-artillery, 1 battalions foot-artillery, 3 corps of engineers, and 3 of sappers and miners, 21 regiments light cavalry, 9 regiments European infantry, 155 native infantry regiments, 23 regiments irregular cavalry; besides which, there are about 15 cavalry and 67 infantry local and irregular regiments.

Four thousand miles of electric telegraph, and miles of railway, are daily at work in Hindostan, while large extensions of both are in progress. The former, after extending its arms all over India, will soon reach Point de Galle, the south-western extremity of Ceylon.

Five companies have been formed under government guarantees for the construction, on a gigantic scale, of railways in India; in all of which the shares are at a premium, and the works progressing more rapidly and cheaply than even the projectors anticipated. One of these will run a line above 1100 miles long, intersecting the entire peninsula, and connecting Bombay with Calcutta. This will accelerate, by more than a week, the arrival of the mail at the latter place, and shorten the journey to England some 1500 miles; besides which, it will open a line of country abounding in minerals, and particularly coal—the scarcity of which is the greatest drawback at present—and possessing a rich soil, beautiful scenery, and a climate equal to or superior to that of any part of the plains of India; but all these advantages have been hitherto unavailable from the want of easy communication by land or water, and that part of the country is little known to or visited by Europeans.

Steamers now ply frequently and regularly on the principal navigable rivers, which, though far inferior in speed and light draught to those used on the American rivers, are a great improvement on the kind of craft which used to ply there previous to their introduction—worse built, worse found, or worse manned craft than the old-country boats and budgerows never floated since the *Argo* was launched. The latter was the more comfortable, but the former the faster of the two, or, more properly speaking, the less slow.

The country boats were often of large size, but modelled and put together in the rudest manner; they were not only flat-bottomed but flat-bowed also, the under part of the stem being like the toe of a Chinese slipper, by which means the greatest possible resistance and the least buoyancy were obtained. Being mere shells, in order to make them fit for Europeans, a platform of bamboos was constructed, nearly on a level with the gunwale, and occupying all the after-part of the boat. On this was erected with grass, bamboos and matting, a temporary house, high enough to stand upright in the middle only, which afforded tolerable protection from the sun, but gave free access to rain, wind, and sand—the last, when it blows fresh, being often the greatest nuisance of the three.

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* Anglicè, locomotive.—To those curious in railway statistics, the returns of Indian railways furnish interesting facts, particularly the immense disproportion of first, second, and third class passengers. The East India Railway gives the following return for six months, ending 30th June 1856: first class, 6466; second class, 23,256; third class, 402,599!

On the upward voyage, these boats were slowly and painfully tracked against the stream, at the average rate of ten or twelve miles a day. Whenever the formation of the river rendered a crossing necessary, this was so clumsily effected, that what had taken hours of labour to attain was often lost in a few minutes. On the downward voyage, they were paddled along in the deepest part of the river, in selecting which the manjie usually shewed great discrimination, and seldom bumped ashore more than twenty or thirty times a day. The paddling, too, was more for appearance' sake than anything else, as it seldom was energetic enough to give her steerage-way; consequently, she swung round with every eddy, and more than half the voyage was performed broadside on or stern-foremost. This kind of craft cannot do much in the sailing line, as there is seldom a fair wind, and when there is, it does not much assist their progress, as the rectangular sail is cut and set with a total disregard to nautical science; and one without a plurality of rents and apertures is a very unusual sight. Besides this, they cannot sail at all unless the wind is dead aft; and even then, before you have advanced very far, a bend of the river is sure to bring it abeam, and the unweatherly craft, having no more grip of the water than a washing-tub, goes bodily away to leeward like a floating haystack, and is soon brought up all standing in the sand-bank. Some of the crew get out into the water, whilst others shove with long bamboos until you get off, only to repeat the same process a few yards further ahead. If the reach be a short one, it is passed in this way with the expenditure of some time, much bad language, and perhaps damage to your crockery and movables; but if it be a long one, the crew soon get tired, and the manjie says: 'The line of fate cannot be obliterated: my brothers, let us smoke.' So acceptable a proposal is at once agreed to, and down they all squat on the shore, hubble-bubble in hand, whilst the boat thumps and grinds unceasingly against the bank. Probably, like yourself, it chafes with the aggravating consciousness that could she only get past the point just ahead, she would have a fair wind for the rest of the day.

Gales of wind sometimes occur, and numbers of these boats are destroyed—either sunk in deep water, broken against the shore, or crushed by the high banks falling on them; and even if the voyage be safely accomplished, it is intolerably slow and tedious—the writer having taken three months in a sixteen-oared budgerow to accomplish a distance which he afterwards performed in three weeks in a steamer towing a large flat, deeply laden with cargo.

In the postal department, too, there is great improvement. India has her postage-stamps and her mail-carts; and the letter which would have cost a rupee, can now be delivered quicker and surer for an anna—this reduction being from two shillings to about three half-pence.

The great trunk-road from Calcutta to the upper provinces was well made and kept; and as far as this went, the mails travelled very fairly; but the roads diverging from this were bad—in many instances, mere tracks through the jungle, without drainage or bridges, and consequently unfit at all times for wheeled carriages, and totally impassable during the rains. The traveller through those regions might observe wherever a deep nullah crossed the road, a stout pole placed on either bank, with a rope suspended between. This was used for conveying the mail-bags over by sliding them across to a man stationed on the other bank, whenever a sudden rising of the nullah rendered it impassable. These ropes remained exposed to the weather all the year round, and were not replaced until they rotted away of themselves, and consequently were not much to be depended on. Like a faithless friend, they often failed when their aid was most needed; and the mail-bag, with its miscellaneous contents, was consigned to eternal oblivion in the raging torrent.

One of these catastrophes was duly chronicled by our Dak Baboo in the following words: 'Mail not come, having been drowned in a nullah.' This Dak Baboo, an individual of portly presence and phlegmatic temperament, was really post-master of the out-station where we were then quartered, as the subaltern who ostensibly discharged the duties gave himself little trouble about them except that, being of an inquiring turn of mind, he liked to make himself acquainted with the nature and extent of his neighbours' correspondence. All the real business was transacted by the Baboo, whose method might be gathered from his reply to our query—'At what hour does the post go out?'—'Generally about sunset, if the Burra Sahib's letters are ready.' A letter from Calcutta cost us then fourteen annas (1s. 9d.), and nominally took eleven days for its transit of 800 miles; but it seldom reached us so soon. Whenever it did arrive dry and clean in the allotted period, we paid our exorbitant postage with thankful hearts, and felt as if we never could be sufficiently grateful. When, on the contrary, we were several days without receiving any mail, and when the stale letter did reach us, partly reduced by moisture and friction to a muddy pulp, we neither grumbled nor stormed, but philosophically looked upon it as the natural and inevitable state of affairs.

In those days, the mails were everywhere carried by men improperly called *Dak-runners*—'*parcæ quia minime parcunt*'—because they never ran except when entering or leaving a station, on the post-boy principle of keeping a gallop for the avenue. They carried the post-bags on their backs, or suspended from a stick over the shoulder, and were fondly supposed by credulous individuals to accomplish four and a half miles per hour, which in truth they seldom did.

Their task was not very arduous, as each runner was relieved every ten or twelve miles; but as the stations were generally long distances apart, and no such thing as a watch or clock to be found on all the intervening space of road, it was almost impossible to ascertain which of the reliefs had caused the delay, so that the loiterer might be fined. The runners knew this, and presumed on the strength of it, suiting their pace exactly to their inclinations. Many stories are told of their lazy and dilatory habits; but there is one which I suppose must be true, as I have heard at least a dozen different persons tell it, the relater being invariably the hero of his own tale.

It would appear that the narrator had been on the march in some remote district, when one morning, just before daybreak, he spied a man stretched by the road-side, apparently fast asleep. Surprised at seeing any one in this position in so wild a spot, he dismounted and approached him, when he perceived that the unconscious individual was a dak-runner, who lay calmly slumbering in the moonlight, 'with the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail,' and the letter-bags converted into a temporary pillow. A vigorous application of the foot, and a shout of 'What are you doing here?' soon roused the sleeper, who started up, and rubbing his eyes with one hand, and his person with the other, exclaimed: '*Hum express hy*' (I'm the express). Yes, this was the swift-footed Mercury who had been intrusted with the conveyance of the express despatched from Bombay on the arrival of the overland mail, and received extra pay for going quicker than the ordinary mail-carriers.

With such messengers as these, it was not very surprising that we were often behindhand with our mails; but late though it might be when they arrived, there was no indecent haste in their delivery. Before opening the bags, they had to be taken to the postmaster aforesaid, in order that he might satisfy himself regarding their contents; they were then returned to the post-office, where, as the peon who acted as letter-carrier could neither read nor understand the English characters, it was necessary to inscribe them with certain Dewanagari hieroglyphics, purporting to be the name and address of the intended recipient. In spelling this, the phonetic method was pursued; and the Hindostanee way of pronouncing a proper name being very dissimilar from the English, the result was a cognomen so original as to make us wonder that the letter ever reached its right destination.

The natives display singular ingenuity in disguising European names, so that the owner could not possibly recognise them, unless acquainted with its Hindoo synonyms; but the most curious part of it is, that however remote from the original this synonym may be, it is invariably the same in all parts of India. Even our old friends Smith and Brown lose their familiar appellation, and become Ismit and Boorun; Captain Cartright is always styled Captaun Coekrile; and Mr Ballingall, Bunghole Sahib. Sometimes even a wider range is taken, and the initial letter only retained: thus Gilpin is substituted for Griffiths; and occasionally, when the original syllables are adhered to, their order is inverted; Sir David Ochterlony, for instance, being invariably spoken of as Lonyochter Sahib.

But somehow or other, the letters generally did, in process of time, reach their destination, unless the confiding writer had paid the postage, and not taken a receipt from the Dak Baboo, in which case their fate was generally involved in mystery. Parcels, too, were transmitted through the post-office—by Dak Banghy, as it was termed—at a high rate, in proportion to their weight. Great dexterity was exhibited in tampering with these, the contents, if valuable, being frequently abstracted, and their place supplied with some substance of equal gravity, though rather less intrinsic value, such as a stone or lump of earth. Watches often disappeared in this manner when sent to Calcutta for the purpose of being repaired, there not being any one in the upper provinces capable of doing so. An ingenious acquaintance, in order to frustrate the rogues, hit upon the device of getting an old book, cutting a circular piece out of the centre, and depositing the watch therein. As the Dak wallahs were not men of literary tastes, the parcel went and came in safety, trusting to which another friend had recourse to the same expedient for transmitting his watch also. Whether the jeweller's address on the parcel betrayed the nature of its contents, or the weight of the pseudo volume told its own tale to the Dak Baboo, who had no experience of how heavy certain emanations from Paternoster Row are, must ever remain a mystery; but certain it is that when the parcel arrived at Calcutta, apparently uninjured, it was found, on opening it, that the place where the watch had been was occupied by a piece of lead!

We have thus taken a retrospective glance at what India was a century ago, and also a cursory view of her intermediate stage and present position; but who can speculate on what she may become ere a similar period has elapsed: when the march of intellect and diffusion of knowledge shall have prepared the way for the introduction of Christianity, the only sure basis of civilisation—when her vast mineral and vegetable resources shall have been developed—when the Suez Canal and Euphrates Valley Railway shall be accomplished facts—when the electric telegraph, *viâ* Constantinople, Bassorah, the Persian Gulf, and Kurrachee, shall have brought Calcutta within speaking distance of Cockaigne!

The ungenial climate must ever be a bar to European colonisation; but sad experience has taught us how to avoid the most unhealthy spots; and greater attention to drainage, clearing, and ventilation will do much to prevent malaria and diminish disease; besides which, increased facilities of communication will place the cool hill-station and refreshing sea-breeze within reach of all, and enable the incipient invalid *venienti occurrere morbo*. With all this, despite of extended territory and increased wealth, we may delicately hint to our readers that the Honourable East India Company is in a state of genteel insolvency. There is an annual deficit of some 2,000,000 in the revenue; nevertheless, they seem to thrive amazingly and live well on the loss. Long may they continue to do so, for if ever the charter be taken from them, and the power now vested in the Court of Directors and Board of Control be taken away, those who now serve and abuse will regret, when too late, the change of masters.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

AN 'INJUN ON THE BACK-TRACK.'

We had advanced about a mile further, when our scouts—who, as usual, had gone forward to reconnoitre—having ascended a swell of the prairie, were observed crouching behind some bushes that grew upon its crest. We all drew bridle to await the result of their reconnaissance. The peculiar attitude in which they had placed themselves, and the apparent earnestness with which they glanced over the bushes, led us to believe that some object was before their eyes of more than common interest.

So it proved. We had scarcely halted, when they were seen to retire suddenly from the cover, and rising erect, run at full speed back down the hill—at the same time making signals to us to conceal ourselves.

Fortunately, there was timber near, and in a few seconds we had all ridden into it, taking the horses of the trappers along with us.

The declivity of the hill enabled the scouts to run with swiftness; and they were among the trees almost as soon as we.

'What is it?' inquired several in a breath.

'Injun on the back-track,' replied the panting trappers.

'Indians!—how many of them?' naturally asked one of the rangers.

'Who sayed Injuns? I sayed a Injun,' sharply retorted Rube. 'Durn yur palaver! thur's no time for jaw-waggin. Git yur rope ready, Bill. 'Ee durned greenhorns! keep down yur guns—shootin won't do hyur—yud hev the hul gang back in the flappin o' a beaver's tail. Let Bill rope the niggur, an the young fellur hyur—he knows how; an ef both shed miss 'im, I ain't agwine. 'Ee hear me, fellurs? Don't ne'er a one o' ye fire: ef a gun ur wanted, Targuts 'll be surfficient, I guess. For yur lives don't a fire them ur blunderboxes o' yourn till I miss—they'd be heerd ten mile off. Ready wi' yur rope, Billee? You, young fellur? All right; mind yur eyes both, an snare the durned niggur like a swamp-rabbit. Yanner he comes, by the jumpin Geehosophat!'

The pithy chapter of instructions above detailed was delivered in far less time than it may take to read it. The speaker never paused till he had uttered the final emphatic expression, which was one of his favourite phrases of embellishment.

At the same instant I saw, just appearing above the crest of the ridge, the head and shoulders of a savage. In a few seconds more, the body rose in sight, and then the thighs and legs, with a large piebald mustang between them. I need scarcely add that the horse was going at a gallop; it is a rare sight when a horse-Indian rides any other gait.

There was only one. The scouts were sure of this. Beyond the swell stretched an open prairie, and if the Indian had had companions or followers, they would have been seen. He was alone.

What had brought him back on the trail? Was he upon the scout? No; he was riding without thought, and without precaution. A scout would have acted otherwise. He might have been a messenger; but whither bound? Surely the Indians had left no party in our rear?

Quickly these inquiries passed among us, from mouth to mouth, and quick conjectures were offered in answer. The voyageur gave the most probable solution.

'Pe gar! he go back for ze sheel.'

'Shield! what shield?'

'Ah, you no see 'im. I see 'im wiz me eyes; he vas caché dans les herbes—von larzg sheel—bouclier très gros—fabriqué from ze peau of de buffle—ze parfleché—et garnie avec les scalps—frais et sanglants—scalps Mexicaines. Mon Dieu!'

The explanation was understood. Le Blanc had observed a shield among the bushes where we had halted—like enough left behind by some of the braves. It was garnished with scalps, fresh Mexican scalps—like enough. The Indian had forgotten both his armour and his trophies; he was on his way to recover them—like enough.

There was no time either for further talk or conjecture: the red horseman had reached the bottom of the hill; in ten seconds more, he would be lazoed or shot.

Garey and I placed ourselves on opposite sides of the path, both with our lazoes coiled and ready. The trapper was an adept in the use of this singular weapon, and I too understood something of its management. The trees were in our way, and would have prevented the proper winding of it; but it was our intention to spur clear of the timber the moment the Indian came within range, and 'rope' him on the run.

Rube crouched behind Garey, rifle in hand, and the rangers were also ready, in case both the lazoes and Rube's rifle should miss.

It would not do to let the Indian either go on or go back; in either case he would report us. Should he pass the spot where we were, he would observe our tracks in a minute's time, even amidst the thousands of others, and would be certain to return by another route. Should he escape from us, and gallop back, still worse. He must not be permitted either to go on or go back; he must be captured or killed!

For my part, I desired that the former should be his destiny. I had no feeling of revenge to gratify by taking the life of this red man; and had his capture not been absolutely necessary to our own safety, I should willingly have let him come and go as he listed.

Some of my comrades were actuated by very different motives. Killing a Comanche Indian was, in their creed, no greater crime than killing a wolf, a panther, or a grizzly bear; and it was not from any motives of mercy that the trapper had cautioned the others to hold their fire; prudence alone dictated the advice—the reports of the guns might be heard.

Through the leaves, I looked upon the savage as he advanced. A fine-looking fellow he was—no doubt one of the first warriors of his tribe. What his face was I could not see, for the war-paint disfigured it with a hideous mask; but his body was large, his chest broad and full, his limbs symmetrical, and well turned to the very toes. He sat his horse like a centaur.

I had no opportunity for prolonged observation. Without hesitating, the Indian galloped up.

I sprang my horse clear of the timber. I wound the lazo around my head, and hurled it towards the savage; I saw the noose settling over his shoulders, even down to his hips.

I spurred in the opposite direction; I felt the quick jerk, and the taut rope told me I had secured the victim.

I turned in my saddle, and glanced back; I saw the rope of Garey around the neck of the Indian's mustang, tightened, and holding him fast. Horse and horseman—both were ours!

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

MY PLAN.

The savage did not yield himself up without resistance. Resistance with an Indian is instinctive, as with a wild animal. He flung himself from his horse, and drawing his knife, with a single cut severed the thong that bound him.

In another instant, he would have been off among the bushes; but before he could move from the spot, half-a-dozen strong arms were around him; and in spite of his struggles, and the dangerous thrusts of his long Spanish knife, he was 'choked' down and held fast.

My followers were for making short work with him. More than one had bared their blades to finish him upon the spot, and would have done so, had I not interfered. I was averse to spilling his blood, and by my intercession, his life was spared.

To prevent him from giving us further trouble, however, we tied him to a tree, in such a manner that he could not possibly free himself.

The mode of securing him was suggested by Stanfield the backwoodsman: it was simple and safe. A tree was chosen, whose trunk was large enough to fill the embrace of the savage, so that the ends of his fingers just met when his arms were drawn to their full stretch around it. Upon his wrists, thongs of raw hide were firmly knotted, and then tied together. His ankles were also bound by similar cords, the ends of which were staked, so as to hinder him from worming around the tree, and perchance wearing off his fastenings, or chafing them, so that they might break.

The ligature was perfect; the most expert jail-breaker could not have freed himself from such a binding.

It was our intention to leave him thus, and *perhaps* set him free upon our return, if we should return by that way—a doubtful hypothesis.

I thought not at the time of the cruelty we were committing. We had spared the Indian's life—a mercy at the moment—and I was too much concerned about the future of others, to waste reflection on his.

We had taken the precaution to leave him at some distance from the place of his capture; others of his party might come after, and discover him, soon enough to interfere with our plans. His prison had been chosen far off in the depth of the woods; even his shouts could not have been heard by any one passing along the trail.

He was not to be left entirely alone: a horse was to be his companion—not his own—for one of the rangers had fancied an exchange. Stanfield—not well mounted—proposed a 'swop,' as he jocosely termed it, to which the savage had no alternative but consent; and the Kentuckian, having 'hitched' his worn-out nag to a tree, led off the skewbald mustang in triumph, declaring that he was now 'squar wi' the Indyens.' Stanfield would have liked it better had the 'swop' been made with the renegade who had robbed him.

We were about to leave the place and move on, when a bright idea suddenly came into my head: it occurred to me that I too might effect a profitable exchange with our new-made captive—a swop, not of horses, but of men—in short, an exchange of persons—of identities! In truth, a bright idea it was, and one that promised well.

I have said that I had already conceived a plan for the rescue of my betrothed: I had done so during the night, and all along the route, in my mind I had been maturing it. The incident that had just transpired had given rise to a host of new ideas—one, above all, that promised to aid me in facilitating the execution of my design. The capture of the savage, which had at first given me uneasiness, I now regarded in a very different light—as a fortunate circumstance. I could not help thinking that I recognised in it the finger of Providence, and the thought inspired me with hope. I felt that I was not forsaken.

The plan I had proposed to myself was simple enough; it would require more of courage than stratagem; but to the former I was sufficiently nerved by the desperate circumstances in which we had become involved. I proposed to enter the Indian camp in the night—of course, by stealth and under cover of the darkness—to find the captive—set her limbs free—and then trust to chance for the after escape of both of us.

If once inside the encampment, and within reach of her, a sudden *coup* might accomplish all this: success was not beyond possibility, nor probability neither; and the circumstances admitted of no plan that promised so fairly.

To have attempted fight with my few followers against such a host—to have attacked the Indian camp, even under the advantage of an alarm—would have been sheer madness. It must have resulted not only in our immediate defeat, but would have destroyed our last chance of rescuing the captive. The savages once alarmed and warned, could never be approached again. Isolina would be lost for ever.

My followers agreed with me upon the imprudence of an attack. Folly they termed it; not from any motives of fear: they were willing to risk all; and had I so ordered, would have charged with me, rifle in hand, into the very midst of the enemy's lines. I knew they would, every man of them. Even the voyageur—the least brave of my party—would not have flinched; for, in the midst of brave men, cowards cease to be.

But such a course would indeed have been folly—madness. We thought not of adopting it; all approved of the plan I had formed, and which I had already set before them as we tarried by the noon halting-place.

Several had volunteered to be my companions—to venture along with me into the camp of the savages; to share with me the extreme of the danger; but for several reasons I was determined to go alone. Should even one of them be along with me, I saw it would double the risk of detection. In this matter, stratagem, not strength, was needed, and speed in the last moments would be worth both.

Of course, I did not expect to get the captive clear without being observed and pursued—that would have been preposterous; she would be too well watched by the savages—not only by her jailers, but by the jealous eyes of those rival claimants of her body.

No; on the contrary, I anticipated pursuit—close and eager; it might be strife; but I trusted to my own swiftness of foot; and to hers; for well knew I her bold heart and free limb: it was no helpless burden I should have to bring away.

I trusted to my being able to baffle their pursuit—to keep them back while she ran forward. For that purpose, I should take with me my knife and revolvers—I trusted to these, and much to chance, or, perhaps, I should rather say to God. My cause was good—my heart firm and hopeful.

Other precautions I intended to take: horses ready as near as they might be brought; men also ready seated in their saddles, rifle in hand—ready for fight, or flight.

Such was the enterprise upon which I was resolved. Success or death was staked upon the issue. If not successful, I cared not to survive it.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

'PAINTING INJUN.'

Withal, I was not reckless. If not sanguine, I was far from despondent; and as I continued to dwell upon it, the prospect seemed to brighten, and success to appear less problematical.

One of the chief difficulties I should have to encounter would be *getting into* the camp. Once inside the lines—that is, among the camp-fires and tents, if there should be any—I would be comparatively safe. This I knew from experience; for it would not be my first visit to an encampment of prairie-Indians. Even in their midst, mingling with the savages themselves, and under the light of their glaring fires, I should be less exposed to the danger of detection than while attempting to cross their lines. First, there might be outlying pickets; then within these the horse-guards; and within these, again, the horses themselves!

You may smile, when I assert that the last was to me a source of apprehension as great as either of the others. An Indian horse is a sentinel not to be despised. He is as much the enemy of the white man as his master; and partly from fear, and partly from actual antipathy, he will not permit the former to approach him. The human watcher may be negligent—may sleep upon his post—the mustang never. The scent of a white man, or the sight of a skulking form, will cause him to snort and neigh; so that a whole camp will either be *stampeded* or put upon the alert in a few minutes. Many a well-planned attack has been defeated by the warning-snort of the sentinel horse.

It is not that the prairie-horse feels any peculiar attachment for the Indian; strange if he did—since tyrant more cruel to the equine race does not exist—no driver more severe, no rider more hard than a horse-Indian.

It is simply the faithfulness which the noble animal exhibits for his companion and master, with the instinct which tells him when that master is menaced by danger. He will do the same service for a white as for a red man; and often does the weary trapper take his lone rest with full confidence that the vigil will be faithfully kept by his horse.

Had there been dogs in the Indian camp, my apprehensions would have been still more acute—the danger would have been more than doubled. Even within the lines, these cunning brutes would have known me as an enemy: the disguise of garments would not avail; by the scent, an Indian dog can at once tell the white from the red man; and they appear to hold a real antipathy against the race of the Saxon. Even in time of truce, a white man entering an Indian camp can scarcely be protected from the wolfish pack.

I knew there were no dogs—we saw tracks of none. The Indians had been upon the war-trail; and when they proceed on these grand expeditions, their dogs, like their women, are left 'at home.' I had reason to be thankful that such was their custom.

Of course it was my intention to go disguised; it would have been madness to have gone otherwise. In the darkest night, my uniform would have betrayed me; but necessarily, in my search for the captive, I should be led within the light of the fires.

It was my design, therefore, to counterfeit the Indian costume; and how to do this had been for some time the subject of my reflections. I had been congratulating myself on the possession of the buffalo-robe. That would go far towards the disguise; but other articles were wanting to complete my costume. The leggings and moccasins—the plumed head-dress and neck ornaments, the long straggling locks, the bronze complexion of arms and breast—the piebald face of chalk, charcoal, and vermilion—where were all these to be obtained? There was no *costumerie* in the desert.

In the moment of excitement that succeeded the capture of the savage, I had been thinking of other things. It was only when we were about to part from him that the idea jumped into my mind—that bright idea—that *he* could *furnish* me—the very man.

I turned back to reconnoitre his person. Dismounting, I scanned him from head to foot. With delight my eyes rested upon his buckskin-leggings, his bead-embroidered moccasins, his pendent collar of javali-tusks, his eagle plumes, stained red, and the ample robe of jaguar-skins that draped his back—all pleased me much.

But that we were bent on an errand of peril, the last would not have been left there. My followers had eyed it with avidity, and more than one of them had been desirous of removing it; but proximate peril had damped the ardour for spoil, and the splendid robe had been permitted to remain where so gracefully it hung upon the shoulders of the savage.

It soon replaced the buffalo-robe upon mine; my boots were cast aside, and my legs encased in the scalp-fringed leggings; my hips were swathed in the leathern 'breech-clout;' and my feet thrust into the foot-gear of the Comanche, which, by good-fortune, fitted to a hair.

There was yet much required to make me an Indian. Comanches upon the war-trail go naked from the waist upward—the tunic-shirt is only worn upon the hunt, or on ordinary occasions. How was I to counterfeit the copper skin—the bronzed arms and shoulders?—the mottled breast—the face of red, and white, and black? Paint only could aid me; and where was paint to be procured? The black we could imitate with gunpowder, but ——

'Wagh!' ejaculated Rube, who was seen holding in his hands a wolf-skin, prettily trimmed and garnished with quills and beads—it was the medicine-bag of the Indian. 'Wagh! I thort we'd find the mateeruls in the niggur's possible-sack—hyur they be!'

Rube had dived his hand to the bottom of the embroidered bag; and, while speaking, drew it triumphantly forth. Several little leathern packets appeared between his fingers, which, from their stained outsides, evidently contained pigments of various colours; whilst a small shining object in their midst proved, on closer inspection, to be a looking-glass!

Neither the trappers nor myself were astonished at finding these odd 'notions' in such a place; on the contrary, it was natural we should have looked for them there. Seldom in peace, but never in time of war, does the Indian ride abroad without his rouge and his mirror!

The colours were of the right sort, and corresponded exactly with those that glittered upon the skin of the captive warrior.

Under the keen edge of a bowie, my mustaches came off in a twinkling: a little grease was procured; the paints were mixed; and placing myself side by side with the Indian, I stood for *his* portrait. Rube was the painter—a piece of soft buckskin his brush, the broad palm of Garey his pallet.

The operation did not last a great while. In twenty minutes it was all over, and the Indian brave and I appeared the exact counterparts of each other. Streak by streak, and spot by spot, had the old trapper imitated those hideous hieroglyphics—even to the red hand upon the breast, and the cross upon the brow. In horrid aspect, the copy quite equalled the original.

One thing was still lacking—an important element in the metamorphosis of disguise: I wanted the long snaky black tresses that adorned the head of the Comanche.

The want was soon supplied. Again the bowie blade was called upon to serve as scissors; and with Garey to perform the tonsorial feat, the *chevelure* of the Indian was shorn of its flowing glories.

The savage winced as the keen blade glistened around his brow; he had no other thought than that he was about to be scalped alive!

''Tain't the way I'd raise his har, the dodrotted niggur!' muttered Rube, as he stood watching the operation. 'Fotch the hide along wi' it, Bill! It 'll save bother—'ee'll hev to make a wig ef 'ee don't; skin 'im, durn 'im!'

Of course Garey did not give heed to the cruel counsel, which he knew was not meant for earnest.

A rude 'scratch' was soon constructed, and being placed upon my head, was attached to my own waving locks. Fortunately, these were of dark colour, and the hue corresponded.

I fancied I saw the Indian smile when he perceived the use we were making of his splendid tresses. It was a grim smile, however, and from the first moment to the last, neither word nor ejaculation escaped from his lips.

Even I was forced to smile; I could not restrain myself. The odd travesty in which we were engaged—the strange commingling of the comic and serious in the act—and above all, the ludicrous look of the captive Indian, after they had close cropped him, was enough to make a stone smile. My comrades could not contain themselves, but laughed outright.

The plume-bonnet was now placed on my head. It was fortunate the brave had one—for this magnificent head-dress is rarely worn on a war-expedition; fortunate, for it aided materially in concealing the counterfeit. The false hair could hardly have been detected even under the light of day.

There was no more to be done. The painter, hair-dresser, and costumier had performed their several offices—I was ready for the masquerade.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE LAST HOURS ON THE TRAIL.

More cautiously than ever, we now crept along the trail, advancing only after the ground had been thoroughly 'quartered' by the scouts. Time was of the least consequence. The fresh sign of the Indians told us they were but a short way ahead of us: we could have ridden within sight of them at any moment.

We did not wish to set eyes on them before sunset. It could be no advantage to us to overtake them on the march, but the contrary. Some lagging Indian might be found in the rear of the band; we might come in contact with him, and thus defeat all our designs.

We hung back, therefore, allowing time for the savages to pitch their camp, and for their stragglers to get into it.

On the other hand, I did not desire to arrive late. The council was to be held that night—so she had learned—and after the council would come the crisis. I must be in time for both.

At what hour would the council take place? It might be just after they had halted. The son of a chief, and a chief himself—for the white renegade was a leader of red men—a question between two such men would not remain long undecided. And a question of so much importance—involving such consequence—property in body and soul—possession of the most beautiful woman in the world!

Oh! I wondered! Could these hideous, ochre-stained, grease-bedaubed brutes appreciate that peerless beauty? Impossible, I thought. The delicate lines of her loveliness would be lost upon their gross eyes and coarse sensual hearts. That pearl beyond price—paste would have satisfied them as well—they could not distinguish the diamond from common glass.

And yet the Comanche is not without love-craft. Coarse as might be the passion, they must have loved her—both must have loved her—red savage and white savage.

For this very reason, the 'trial' would not be delayed; the question would be speedily decided, so that the quarrel of the chiefs might be brought to an end. For this very reason, the crisis might be hastened, the council take place at an early hour; for this very reason, I too must needs be upon the spot at an early hour.

It was my aim to arrive within sight of the Indian encampment just before night—in the twilight, if possible—that we might be able to make reconnaissance of the ground before darkness would cover it from our view. We were desirous of acquainting ourselves with the lay of the surrounding country as well, so that, in the event of our escape, we should know which was the best direction to take.

We timed our advance by the sign upon the trail. The keen scouts could tell, almost to a minute, when the latest tracks were made; and by this we were guided. Both glided silently along, their eyes constantly and earnestly turned upon the ground.

Mine were more anxiously bent upon the sky; from that quarter I most feared an obstacle to the execution of my purpose. What a change had come over my desires!—how different were they from those of the two preceding nights! The very same aspect of the heavens that had hitherto chagrined and baffled me, would now have been welcome. In my heart, I had lately execrated the clouds; in that same heart I was now praying for cloud, and storm, and darkness!

Now could I have blessed the clouds—there were none to bless; not a speck appeared over the whole face of the firmament—the eye beheld only the illimitable ether.

In another hour, that boundless blue would be studded with millions of bright stars; and, silvered by the light of a resplendent moon—the night would be as day.

I was dismayed at the prospect. I prayed for cloud, and storm, and darkness. Human heart! when blinded by its own petty passions, unreasoning and unreasonable; my petition was opposed to the unalterable laws of nature—it could not be heard.

I can scarcely describe how the aspect of that bright sky troubled and pained me. The night-bird, which joys only in deepest darkness, could not have liked it less. Should there be moonlight, the enterprise would be made more perilous—doubly more. Should there be moonlight—why need I form an hypothesis? Moonlight there *would* be to a certainty. It was the middle of the lunar month, and the moon would be up almost as the sun went down—full, round, and almost as bright as he, with no cloud to cover her face—to shroud the earth from her white diaphanous light. Certainly there would be moonlight!

Well thought of was that disguise—well spent was our labour in making it so perfect. Under the moonlight, to it only could I trust; by it only might I expect to preserve my incognito.

But the eye of the Indian savage is sharp, and his perception keen—almost as instinct itself. I could not rely much upon my borrowed plumes should speech be required from me. Just on account of the cunning imitation, the perfectness of the pattern, some friends of the original might have business with me—might approach and address me. I knew but a few words of Comanche—how should I escape from the colloquy?

Such thoughts were troubling me as we rode along the trail.

Night was near; the sun's lower limb rested on the far horizon of the west: the hour was an anxious one to me.

The scouts had been for some time in the advance without returning to report; and we had halted in a copse to wait for them. A high hill was before us, wooded only at the summit; over this hill the war-trail led. We had observed the scouts go into the timber. We kept our eyes upon the spot, waiting for their return.

Presently one of them appeared just outside the edge of the wood—Garey, we saw it was. He made signs to us to come on.

We rode up the hill, and entered among the trees; here we diverged from the trail. The scout guided us through the trunks over the high summit. On the other side, the wood extended only a little below; but we did not ride beyond it; we halted before coming to its edge, and dismounting, tied our horses to the trees.

We crept forward on our hands and knees till we had reached the utmost verge of the timber; through the leaves we peered, looking down into the plain beyond. We saw smokes and fires, and a skin-lodge in their midst; we saw dark forms around—men moving over the ground, and horses with their heads to the grass: we were looking upon the Comanche camp.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

THE COMANCHE CAMP.

We had reached our ground just at the moment I had desired. It was twilight—dark enough to render ourselves inconspicuous under the additional shadow of the trees, yet sufficiently clear to allow a full reconnaissance of the enemy's position. Our point of view was a good one—under a single *coup d'œil* commanding the encampment, and a vast extent of country around it. The hill we had climbed—a sort of isolated *butte*—was the only eminence of any considerable elevation for miles around; and the site of the camp was upon the plain that stretched away from its base—apparently beyond limit.

This plain was what is termed a 'pecan' prairie—that is, a prairie half-covered with groves, copses, and lists of woodland—in which the predominating tree is the pecan—a species of hickory (*carya olivæformis*), bearing an oval, edible nut of commercial value. Between the groves and *mottes* of timber, single trees stood apart, their heads fully developed by the free play given to their branches. These park-looking trees, with the coppice-like groves of the pecan, lent an air of high civilisation to the landscape; and a winding stream, whose water, under the still lingering rays, glistened with the sheen of silver, added to the deception. Withal, it was a wilderness—a beautiful wilderness. Human hands had never planted those groves—human agency had nought to do with the formation or adornment of that lovely landscape.

Upon the bank of the stream, and about half a mile from the base of the hill, stood the Indian camp. A glance at the position shewed how well it had been chosen—not so much for defence, as to protect it against a surprise.

Assuming the lodge—there was but one—as the centre of the camp, it was placed upon the edge of a small grove, and fronting the stream. From the tent to the water's edge, the plain sloped gently downward, like the glacis of a fortification. The smooth sward that covered the space between the trees and the water was the ground of the camp. On this could be seen the dusky warriors, some afoot, standing in various attitudes, or moving about; others reclining upon the grass, and still others bending over the fires, as if engaged in the preparation of their evening meal.

A line of spears, regularly placed, marked the allotment of each. These slender shafts, nearly five yards in length, rose tall above the turf, like masts of distant ships, displaying their profusion of pennons and bannerets, of painted plumes and human hair. At the base of each could be seen the gaudy shield, the bow and quiver, the embroidered pouch and medicine-bag of the owner; and grouped around many of them appeared objects of a far different character—objects that we could not contemplate without acute emotion. They were women: enough of light still ruled the sky to shew us their faces; they were white women—the captives. Strange were my sensations as I regarded those forms and faces; but they were far off—even a lover's eye was unequal to the distance.

Flanking the camp on right and left were the horses. They occupied a broad belt of ground, for they were staked out to feed, and each was allowed the length of his lazo. Their line converged to the rear, and met behind the grove, so that the camp was embraced by an arc of browsing animals, the river forming its chord. Across the stream, the encampment did not extend.

I have said that the spot was well selected to guard against a surprise. Its peculiar adaptability consisted in the fact, that the little grove that backed the camp was the only timber within a radius of a thousand yards. All around, and even on the opposite side of the stream, the plain was treeless and free from cover of any kind. There were no inequalities of ground, neither 'brake, bush, nor scaur' to shelter the approach of an enemy.

Had this position been chosen, or was it accidental? In such a place and at such a time, it was not likely they had any fear of a surprise; but with the Indian, caution is so habitually exercised, that it becomes almost an instinct; and doubtless under such an impulse, and without any forethought whatever, the savages had aptly fixed upon the spot where they were encamped. The grove gave them wood; the stream, water; the plain, pabulum for their horses. With one of these last for their own food, they had all the requisites of an Indian camp.

At the first glance, I saw the strength of their position—not so much with the eye of a soldier, as with that of a hunter and bush-fighter did I perceive it. In a military sense, it offered no point of defence; but it could not be approached by stratagem, and that is all the horse-Indian ever fears. Alarm him, not too suddenly, give him five minutes' warning, and he cannot be attacked. If superior in strength, you may chase him, but you must be better mounted than he to bring him to close combat. Retreat, not defence, is generally the leading idea of Comanche strategy, unless when opposed to a Mexican foe. Then he will stand fight with the courage of a master.

As I continued to gaze at the Indian encampment, my heart sank within me. Except under cover of a dark night, a very dark night, it could not be entered. The keenest spy could not have approached it: it appeared unapproachable.

The same thought must at that moment have occupied the minds of my companions; I saw the gloom of disappointment on the brows of all, silent and sullen. None of them said a word; they had not spoken since we came upon the ground.

PRESENT STATE OF THE BESSEMER QUESTION.

It is only some few months since all Europe was standing on tiptoe, in expectation of witnessing a great and marvellous revolution in the manufacture of iron and steel, by a new and ingenious process, to which it is only necessary to allude in passing as that patented by Mr Bessemer. It was something quite astounding to those who knew by what tedious and expensive means steel was produced from iron in the olden time, to be told that, by the new process, steel was the easier and cheaper production of the two. It was no less wonderful in the eyes of those who had considered iron as, at least in the open air, an incombustible, to be shewn that it was, in fact, a highly combustible material; and that, if once heated by fire to a certain point, it might then, by strong air-currents, be actually *itself set on fire*, and made to burn with a fierce incandescence.

It is humiliating to think upon what small matters great ones often depend. There appears to be no reasonable doubt that Mr Bessemer would have realised all he promised to accomplish but for one slight circumstance, which it is our intention now to explain, and the difficulty connected with which has, at least for the present, frustrated his expectations.

The subject of iron-founding has been so completely popularised by the discussions of this patent in the public press, that it will only be necessary for us to recall attention to the fact, that iron ore contains several foreign matters in intimate combination, and that upon their expulsion during the founding process depends the success of the ironmaster's work. These foreign bodies are chiefly carbon, silicon, sulphur, and *phosphorus*. The old methods of roasting, casting, refining, puddling, and rolling were found to effect the object in view sufficiently for all practical purposes. In Mr Bessemer's process, all these substances, *except phosphorus*, are effectually expelled. It would seem that up to the present time this material has resisted all the efforts of Mr Bessemer. It defies the utmost heat of his furnaces, and has no sufficient affinity for oxygen, or any other body brought in contact with it, to consent, for its sake, to let go its tenacious grasp of the iron. Now, phosphorus in iron is, as it appears, fatal to the useful qualities of the metal; it renders the iron brittle and unserviceable; and as no portion of it can be detected in the *slag* of the furnace, it would seem that, so far as its expulsion is concerned, Mr Bessemer has as yet altogether failed. But it would surely not be at all philosophical to conclude that the question is finally set at rest, however serious the objection may be to which we have now called attention. It can hardly be too much to expect that in the resources of modern science some ingredient may yet be discovered, the results of which, in the instance before us, will be no less striking than those of soda, borax, and potash, when used as fluxes in various industrial operations. We should not be surprised any day to hear that some such depurgative had been discovered, and that its admixture with the incandescent iron in the furnace was found to detach the phosphorus, and leave the iron in a perfectly pure state. We wish we could go further than suggest the existence of some such drug, or metal, or mineral, whatever it may be. We suspect that the man who could go further than this, and supply Mr Bessemer with its local habitation and its name, would participate largely in a most lucrative as well as scientifically honourable discovery.

We could ourselves easily indicate certain metallic combinations which, in dealing with phosphorus in its uncombined state, possess the power of neutralising its caustic properties; but this may be far indeed from indicating a power in such preparations to deal with that wonderful substance as it is found in nature, united with the crude oxide of iron. Indeed, we take for granted that men of the highest mark in chemical science are just now eagerly devoting their attention to this interesting problem; and, as we have said, we look forward rather hopefully than otherwise to the result.

We are very far from participating in the triumph expressed by many at the partial, and, in truth, temporary failure in the expectations raised in the public mind by Mr Bessemer and his discoveries; but it is still true that, up to the present time, the 'revolution' has not come off. The new aspirants for dominion in the realms of metallurgy—we mean, of course, air-blast and oxygen—have not as yet been able to wrest the sceptre from the hand of 'Old King *Coal*.' His carbonaceous majesty is still 'master of the situation;' how long he may continue so, we by no means venture to take on ourselves even to conjecture.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

One of the gentlemen who visited Mount Sinai in company with Bishop Clayton, happened, on his return to England, to pass through Sicily. Though by no means a person of romantic character, he had a fancy for wandering about mountains, for getting belated in forests, and supping by the light of wood-fires under a rock. It was perfectly natural, therefore, that he should wish to visit Mount Etna, look at the great chestnut-trees, and examine that marvellous belt of vegetation, so admirably described by the commandant Dolilnian, which encircles the cone of the volcano, and marks the point at which in general the streams of lava are arrested in their downward progress.

Our traveller's unromantic name was Fennel, and he had along with him two friends, considerably younger than himself, the one a clergyman, the other a barrister. Two servants, not much accustomed to sojourn in strange countries, rough Yorkshiremen, speaking their native dialect in perfection, and despising everything not English, waited upon the triad of travellers; and when they left Catania, two guides were hired to conduct the party through the labyrinth of woods, gorges, glens, ravines, and precipices which intercepts the ascent to the crater, and renders it at all times an enterprise of considerable danger.

For nearly a week before they set out, the mountain had exhibited some symptoms of internal uneasiness. Earthquakes passed like gentle tremors beneath the city—not rocking or heaving up the earth—not cracking the walls, or dismantling the houses—but just giving a tremulous motion to the pavement under your feet, and at night causing the pillow under your head to seem for an instant about to float away. To the Catanians, this was nothing: they had been used to it from the cradle. Their houses all stood upon lava, were built with lava; the detritus of lava formed the very soil in their gardens, and the fruits they ate had a rich lava relish. In some sense, they were half lava themselves—cold without, fiery within, feeling much, reflecting little, always on the brink of an impassioned eruption, but kept from running over, except at widely distant periods, by the paucity of materials in their constitution.

Mr Fennel, as a true Englishman, loved to see sights, and therefore longed for an eruption; but the Catanians assured him he would have to wait at least a month, in order to enjoy that peculiar spectacle. He determined to wait two months if necessary; but in the meantime, thought it would be pleasant and interesting to run up and get a peep at the crater. The wind blew strongly from the west, and spun out the dusky smoke into long ribbons in the air. Once or twice in the night, he thought he could detect red sparks among the fuliginous vapour, which now and then increased largely in volume, and issued from the breast of the mountain with something like a deep grunt. The young clergyman observed jocularly that Enceladus was snorting or snoring in his sleep. But the barrister, familiar with the slang of men about town, maintained that there was a row among the Titans, and that Typhoeus having got Mr Enceladus's head into Chancery, was pommelling him about the nob, and making him seek to deliver himself with fierce puffing and contortions. Mr Fennel laughed at their absurdity, which he did not even pretend to mistake for wit, and determined to set out early in the evening to see with his own eyes, as he expressed it, what it was all about. At the hour appointed, the mules were ready, and off they went. To describe what they saw, what they felt, what they thought, and what they said, would fill a volume of no small dimensions. Sicily is big, every inch of it, with wonder; and no writer, so far as I know, has succeeded in conveying to an untravelled reader any idea of its awe-inspiring scenery. You know very well that every step you take conducts you over unfathomable gulfs of fire, from which you are separated only by a thin crust, which may at any moment crack and fall in. You know that interminable beds of sulphur extend from the great volcanic peak in unnumbered leagues out beneath the sea, and that for thousands of years they have supplied fuel to that prodigious fireplace, whose chimney rises 10,000 feet towards the empyrean. You feel mingling with the air you breathe the warmth of that mighty conflagration, which, forcing its way throughout the earth and the rocks, communicates a luxuriance to every kind of vegetation unknown in other parts of the world. But in spite of this knowledge, you are led, by the example of the inhabitants, to put confidence in appearances, and to imagine that those more stupendous Phlegrean fields will continue safely for your time to hang floating over subterranean fires, displaying their beauty and their sublimity, and concealing altogether from the eye the fearful apparatus by which their splendours are produced.

As everybody knows, the ascent of Mount Etna is not to be accomplished in an hour or two. If you wish to reach it by daybreak, that you may witness sunrise from its summit, you must set out early the evening before. If your mules are vigorous, you may perhaps find time for a short nap, a little after midnight, and recommence the ascent about three o'clock. In the case of Mr Fennel and his companions, the mules performed their part with great perseverance and fidelity. If you have travelled by night in a mountainous and woody country, you must know what an exciting thing it is; what gulfs of shadow you gaze at from time to time, straining your eyes in vain to penetrate into their depths; what towering precipices nod and frown over you; what sounds, wild and startling, and proceeding from you know not what cause, come at intervals through the woods; and how your heart beats with something very much like fear, but yet not unmingled with pleasure, as you spring over chasms, after the example of your guide, and climb zigzag along the face of cliffs which seem inclined to carry you up higher than Babel's projected tower into the sky!

It was already one o'clock, when the guides, who are perfectly despotic during such undertakings, pronounced it time to halt and take a little refreshment; after which, if so inclined, the whole party, they said, might sleep for two hours without running the least risk of not reaching the edge of the crater by sunrise. They did halt; and while the servants were kindling a fire with dried wood, which lay about in plenty, Mr Fennel amused himself with looking down the vast sweeps of the mountain towards the sea. In that part of the world, nobody appears to sit up late; and at the time to which I now refer, the Sicilian cities had no lamps. You consequently beheld nothing on shore, save dusky irregularities descending and undulating to the extreme verge of the shore. But the sea, when it bares its breast to the stars, has always a faint glimmer diffused over it. On the present occasion, there were patches of phosphorescence which, like small luminous isles, flashed and floated between you and the Tarentine promontory. Science may dissipate as it pleases the mystery of these phenomena, but nothing can still that disquietude of the heart with which you contemplate the waves on fire, looking like so many glowworms several leagues in dimensions, floating leisurely away before the wind. From enjoying this curious prospect, Mr Fennel was called away by the announcement that supper was ready. He then joined his companions, ate, drank, and went, wrapped in his cloak, to sleep, like a red Indian, with his feet towards the fire.

We men are very clever in our way, but nature is often too many for us. According to their day and generation, those travellers were highly scientific, knew all about volcanoes, could dissertate learnedly on gases, and decide beforehand to an inch how far a heavy body, by whatever cause put in motion, could travel in two hours. With regard to the guides, it was altogether impossible that they could ever be taken napping: they understood all the tricks of Etna as well as he did himself, and could always decide whole days beforehand what he was going to do next. Nevertheless, he now stole a march upon them. Awaking with a start, they were surprised at feeling a warmth much greater than their wood-fire was calculated to impart; the sky, moreover, was filled with a blood-red glare, which bewildered at once their senses and their imagination, and the terrible idea suggested itself to their minds that the eruption was in full progress. Indeed, they had but to look around them to discover undeniable proofs of it. They were standing on a knoll skirted on the side of the cone with trees, and on the right and left, a broad stream of fire, glowing like a furnace, was rushing down into the plain, overthrowing everything in its passage—trees, rocks, and, where it encountered them, human dwellings. Never did Mr Fennel witness anything so awful as the red glare cast upon the woods by the desolating torrent as it swept on. He turned to the guides, who stood beside him paralysed with terror.

'How are we to get out of this situation?' inquired he.

We don't know,' they replied; 'we have never before been placed in such circumstances. But we must make some movement, and that speedily, too, or we shall be burned to cinders where we stand. Look! the lava is coming; and those vast trees are bending and cracking at its touch like fine grass.'

'Well,' replied the traveller, 'lead the way—you must know it better than we—that we may get out into the plain country before the fiery streams meet below, and hem us in.'

'You are right,' declared the guides; 'for the lava is pursuing the course of two ravines which have their confluence below yonder hill; and if we fail to precede them, we are lost.'

The jokers of the morning were not at all inclined to joke now. The lava was sending its intolerable heat before it, warning them that inevitable death was near unless they escaped from it by miraculous celerity. Down the mountain, therefore, they went, leaving everything behind them but the iron-shod staves which they carried in their hands. The landscape, previously so silent, was now filled on all sides with fearful noises—the bellowing of terrified herds, the shouts and shrieks of human beings, the sudden bursting up of flames here and there, as the torrents reached some combustible matters, the tumbling down of rocks, and the crash of forests, as the irresistible lava forced its way through them. Every moment the glowing flood rose higher and higher, until it overflowed its banks, and began to diffuse itself over the rocky plateau along which the travellers were rushing towards the distant city. At length they came suddenly upon the edge of a precipice, down which they looked, but could discern no bottom. On the right and left was the fire; in front, a gulf of unknown depth; behind, the lava rolling towards them with terrific rapidity, scorching, in its advance, trees, grass, nay, the very earth, which it absorbed and liquefied by its indescribable heat.

'Are you ignorant of this cliff?' inquired Mr Fennel; 'or may we hope to save our lives by throwing ourselves over?'

'It lies entirely out of our usual track,' replied the men, 'and we have never seen it before.'

I do not pretend to describe Mr Fennel's feelings at that moment, because he has left behind him no record of them. It is well known that extreme danger often renders men silent: they do not converse, do not discuss their means of escape, do not communicate their fears; their mental powers appear for the moment to be annihilated—they only feel. But what feelings are theirs! All Sicily now appeared to be on fire. The earth was reddening on every side; the sky overhead glowed like a furnace-mouth, and clouds dense, charged with igneous particles, and emitting an intolerable stench, were precipitated upon them by the west wind. To be scorched to death, or suffocated, appeared now inevitable, unless they threw themselves over the precipice, and so delivered themselves from such fate by suicide. While they were meditating on this idea, the earth under them began to rock violently. It shook: there was a wild crash; the rock parted and yawned, and they beheld a red streak making its way eastward through the bottom of the crevice. They fled, not knowing whither, towards the left; but their progress was soon arrested by the heat thrown out by the lava. All thoughts, all eyes, were now directed towards the precipice: should they dash over, and, by one leap in the dark, either deliver themselves from the most fearful of deaths, or put an end to their agonies at once? With sensations which baffle all description, they approached the edge of the rock, and looked over it. Could they discern anything below? No; all was thick darkness, suggesting unfathomable depth. They would remain therefore where they were, in the hope that the lava might rise no higher, and that when the light of day should make its appearance, they might see some avenue of deliverance. But this hope the guides dissipated. They knew too well that the lava-streams now separated would meet and mix before morning, and leave not one inch of the ground they now stood on unflooded by fire. Yet all hesitated to plunge down they knew not whither in the dark. While they lived, while they breathed, something like a miracle perhaps might occur to preserve them. They would therefore hope, and defer taking the fatal plunge till there should be nothing else left them. It soon came to this: the fiery circle became contracted, the heat and the sense of suffocation intolerable, and at length the young clergyman, with a mixture of horror and resignation in his countenance, volunteered to make the first plunge. In spite of the volcanic glow, his face assumed the hue of death as he approached the rock. He did not dash forward—he did not throw himself headlong—he turned round, and clinging to the rock with his hands, remained there suspended for a moment, and then——

What was that noise?—that of a body dashing against the rocks—down, down fearfully into some unfathomable gulf. The survivors shouted in agony, and besought him to reply if he still lived. But no answer. Mr Fennel then said it was his turn, and in the same way he committed himself into the depths of air. There was another pause of suspense and agony. Again the survivors listened: again no answer came. Then followed the barrister; and after that, pell-mell, rushed down servants and guides, and there was silence. They had all taken the leap in the dark, and were they on the shores of Acheron? The precipice, if I may borrow an Hibernianism for the occasion, was no precipice at all, but a very shallow rock, with soft grass growing up to its base. Why, then, did they who leaped not answer? They thought they were going to inevitable death, and that thought for a moment paralysed them, so that they did not recover the use of speech for several minutes. Those minutes had appeared an age to those who awaited a reply. But, long as the time seemed, there elapsed, probably, only a few seconds between the plunge of the clergyman and the simultaneous spring of the servants and guides. What roused them at last was the lava glow, flashing upon them from the rocks above. They rose with a feeling of indescribable gratitude, mingled with fear, and hastened eastward over the plain. They were not yet beyond the reach of the Etnean surges, and therefore pushed along with eager speed till they reached the point where the lava-streams must soon have their confluence. They dashed through the gap—they ascended the rocks on the side of Catania, and soon stood upon a high terrace before the city walls, from whence they beheld Etna vomiting forth in smoke and thunder those red torrents, which, at wide intervals, desolate and fertilise the plains of Sicily, suggesting ideas of immeasurable antiquity, since all that part of the island has been gradually created by the mountain. With sobered feelings, and curiosity thoroughly quenched, Mr Fennel set sail, on the following day, for England, where he often spoke of his leap in the dark.

FRIDAY AN UNLUCKY DAY?

NONSENSE: it is nothing of the kind. And the best way to prove this, if we would only take the trouble so to do, is to collect and adduce groups of instances in which joys and successes, happy enterprises, fortunate determinations, world-improving schemes, have been initiated on Friday. Do not, good reader, deem this process of proof beneath you: it is always worth while to remove prejudices; for to shew the fallacy of aught that is untrue, is to render due allegiance to that august lady who is said by some learned men to 'live at the bottom of a well.'

Not that we can ever remove such prejudices entirely. To whatever subject science has not yet reached, there luck and ill-luck maintain a sovereignty in popular belief. Lucky numbers have had a prodigious reputation ever since the days of the astrologers, and long before. Three, four, five, six, seven, nine, ten, twelve, twenty-one—all have had advocates, as being numbers to which certain special attributes pertain. Number seven had a long reign, but it is being gradually deposed; for the talk of seven metals and seven planets will no longer accord with the discoveries of modern times. We know—indeed the number of such believers is still considerable—a person of education and general good sense, who would refuse to sit down at table if the number of diners were thirteen; he would rather have a domestic servant included among the guests, or would go without his own dinner, or would retain a supplementary guest at hand for exigencies, than be placed under the cloud of the dreaded thirteen. Ask him why; he can only say it is 'unlucky.' Ask him why it is unlucky; he can only say, 'because it is.' In the old days of lotteries, when it was optional in the purchaser to select a ticket of any particular number, the theory of lucky and unlucky numbers was in full power. Some adventurer in the lottery would select the number representing his own age; another, the current year of the Christian era; another, the year in which he was born; another, the number of pounds in the greatest prize; another, a number revealed to him in a dream. The *Spectator* discourses of a nonconformist, who, being a great enemy to popery, and believing that bad men are the most fortunate in this world, selected 666 against any other number, because it is the number of the Beast. Lotteries are now dead by law in England; but let us only look down the advertising columns of the sporting newspapers, and consider how astounding is the credulity there implied; seeing that men will give money to knavish charlatans for the expression of a *guess* concerning the name of the horse that will win in the forthcoming Derby, Oaks, or St Leger race. If a man would toss heads and tails with himself, it would be better; for the guess would be just as good, and he would save the charlatan's fee; but in either case, it is a relic of the old feeling, a belief in lucky numbers or lucky names.

Certain days of the year have had celebrity, either as lucky or unlucky days; sometimes only in the thoughts of individuals, but occasionally throughout wide circles of society. There was a queer little volume published two centuries ago, something midway in character between Buchan's *Domestic Medicine* and the *Young Man's Best Companion*, in which it is said: 'Six dayes of the year are perilous of death; and therefore philosophers forbid men to let blood on them, or take any drink: that is to say, January 3, July 1, October 2, April 30, August 1, December 21. These six dayes with great diligence ought to be kept, but mainly the latter three, for all the veins are then full. . . . If any child be born in these three latter dayes, they shall die a wicked death.' In an old Roman calendar, on the 13th of December, prognostications of the weather were drawn for the whole year. Another old weather-book asserts that the feast of St Barnabas and the feast of St Simon and St Jude are often tempestuous days. A writer of the Elizabethan times enumerated no less than sixty 'unlucky' days in the year; the month of January was especially unfortunate in this matter; for the 1st, 2d, 4th, 5th, 10th, 15th, 17th, and 29th days of this month were included in the doleful catalogue. The ancients had their *dies albi* and *dies atri*—'white days' and 'black days.' St Augustine, in commenting on a passage in St Paul's epistle to the Galatians, says that it was meant to apply to those persons who regulated their conduct by reference to the particular day of the month, or to the age of the moon, or to the relative positions of the planets, or to the year being leap-year, &c. There are many old missals and breviaries, produced before the days of printing, which contain a sort of calendar in Latin, enumerating the days in the year which are to be regarded as unlucky: these are January 1 and 7, February 3 and 4, March 1 and 4, April 10 and 11, May 3 and 7, June 10 and 15, July 10 and 13, August 1 and 2, September 3 and 10, October 3 and 10, November 3 and 5, December 7 and 10; all kinds of miseries—swords, slaying, dying, blood, wounds, drinking to death, treachery, malaria, serpent's venom, scorpion's sting—are associated with these days. To our perplexity, however, the unlucky days do not at all accord with those given by the Elizabethan writer. A treatise was published in 1687 with the sole purpose of proving that the 14th of October is a lucky day; because 'our magnanimous magnificent sovereign, James II., was born upon that augural day;' because that day

Gave the Norman duke
That victory when he England's sceptre took;

because Edward III. safely landed on that day after his tempestuous voyage from France; because the siege of Calais by the French king was frustrated on that day; and because on that day, in 1557, a treaty of peace was signed between Rome, France, and Spain. When a date is said to have some connection with a particular state of the weather, the assertion is worthy of a little more attention; since modern meteorologists have found themselves justified in looking out for meteors on certain days in August and November, and since the sun's place in the ecliptic may have much to do with the weather; therefore, when it is stated that the feast of St Barnabas, and that of St Simon and St Jude (June 11th and October 28th) are likely to be stormy days; or when it is stated by Dr Forster in his *Perennial Calendar*, that the 15th of September is fine in six years out of seven—the assertion may possibly rest rather upon science than upon superstition.

Particular days of the week, again, have had their lucky and unlucky attributes in the minds of some persons. Stow remarks that Thursday was connected with many disastrous events in the career of Henry VIII. and those of his line. A book published during the reign of Charles I., discoursed on the unlucky characteristics of three Mondays in the year—namely, the first Monday in April, as that on which Cain was born and Abel was slain; the second Monday in August, as that on which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed; and the last Monday in December, as that on which Judas was born. In the old *Statistical Account of Scotland*, under the heading of Logierait in Perthshire, the inhabitants of the parish are spoken of as being prone to the belief in lucky and unlucky days. 'The day of the week on which the 14th of May happens to fall, for instance, is deemed unlucky through all the remainder of the year. In fevers, the illness is expected to be more severe on Sunday than on other days of the week; if easier on Sunday, a relapse is feared.' In the parish of Kirkwall, the same authority states that many of the inhabitants 'will neither go to sea in search of fish, nor perform any sort of work at home,' on certain days of the year. In Caithness, 'no gentleman of the name of Sinclair will put on green apparel, or think of crossing the Ord, upon a Monday. They were dressed in green and they crossed the Ord upon a Monday on their way to the battle of Flodden, where they fought and fell in the cause of their country, almost without leaving a representative of their name behind them. The day and the dress are accordingly regarded as inauspicious. If the Ord must be got beyond on Monday, the journey is preferred by sea.' Supposing these statements to be true, in reference to the time when Sir John Sinclair collected the materials for his valuable work, it would be interesting to know whether the subsequent period has been marked by any changes in the popular belief in question.

But Friday is the unlucky day, *par excellence*, according to the opinion of the million. Singular, indeed, is it to notice how wide-spread is this credence or credulity. Some writers, who claim to know all about the chronology of early events, even to days and hours, tell us that Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit on Friday, and died on Friday; hence the inauspicious characteristics of that day. Others have picked out a few Fridays in connection with events and persons at the time of the introduction of Christianity, and have made poor Friday responsible for ever afterwards. For the greater part, however, the dictum has been accepted without any troublesome inquiry into its cause or authority: we know that the cat breaks everything, no other culprit coming forward; and on some such principle, Friday is selected as a scapegoat among the days of the week. The Spaniards have a pretty general opinion that it is unlucky to begin any enterprise on a Friday; and the Finlanders couple that day with Monday in the same bad list. The *Statistical Account of Scotland*, already quoted, tells us that, half a century ago, in some parts of Banffshire, 'few persons would choose to be married on a Friday.' Richard Cœur de Lion was killed on a Friday; and the event was chronicled in a ballad, in which Friday is frowned upon for evermore. A Shropshire adage holds the balance evenly between this day and the other days of the week; for it announces that Friday has always either the *best* or the *worst* weather in the week. Seamen are the most redoubtable defenders of the ill-Friday theory; they generally dislike to start for a voyage on that day; and some of the bluff old admirals and captains are believed to retain the prejudices in this matter imbibed in the early days when they served before the mast. In 1848, it was whispered at one of our southern ports that the port-admiral had delayed the departure of a ship in the government service for one day, in order that Friday might give place to the better-omened Saturday. If you tell a seaman this is pure nonsense, he will quote you instances in abundance. He will adduce the case in which, to disabuse sailors of their prejudice, a shipowner caused a ship to be laid down on Friday, launched on Friday, sent forth on her first voyage on Friday, and placed under the command of a captain named Friday: the ship was never again heard of. He will tell you that the *Amazon* West India mail-steamer left Plymouth on her first voyage on Friday, January 2, 1852, and was burnt to the water's edge, with a loss of 115 lives; and that the *Birkenhead* troop-steamer, which left Southampton on that very same day, was wrecked in her voyage, with a loss of 454 lives. He will tell you that one of the survivors of the *Amazon* joined the ship on a Friday, procured his register-ticket on a Friday, received his appointment on a Friday, left London in the ship for Plymouth on a Friday, and sailed from that port on a Friday; and that a foreboding of disaster arose in his sailor-mind when this list of Fridays came to his recollection.

But what the sailors have *not* told, and what the ill-Friday believers have not cared to inquire about, is the number of disasters that occur upon, and are associated with, the other six days of the week. Let them give poor Friday fair-play, and he will come up to a level with his companions. If it be a catalogue of shipwrecks, burnings, or other disasters, why not inquire whether such do not occur on the other days of the week in as large number as on Friday? If it be a list of fortunate or happy events, why not search candidly for a fair seventh of these on Fridays? The Great Mogul, Aurungzebe, is said to have exclaimed: 'O that my death may happen on a Friday, for blessed is he that dieth on that day!' but as we do not know why he adopted this theory, we can say nothing further about it. As an example, however, of the mode in which a sensible person may upset a stupid prejudice, we will quote a passage from an American newspaper, shewing that the great republic, at all events, has had no reason to consider Friday an unlucky day: 'On Friday, August 21, 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed on his great voyage of discovery; on Friday, October 12, 1492, he first discovered land; on Friday, January 4, 1493, he sailed on his return to Spain, which, if he had not reached in safety, the happy result would never have been known which led to the settlement of this vast continent; on Friday, March 15, 1493, he arrived at Palos in safety; on Friday, November 22, 1493, he arrived at Hispaniola, on his second voyage to America; on Friday, June 13, 1494, he, though unknown to himself, discovered the continent of America. On Friday, March 5, 1496, Henry VII. of England gave to John Cabot his commission, which led to the discovery of North America: this is the first American state-paper in England. On Friday, September 7, 1565, Melendez founded St Augustine, the oldest town in the United States by more than forty years. On Friday, November 10, 1620, the *Mayflower*, with the Pilgrims, made the harbour of Province Town, and on the same day they signed that august compact, the forerunner of our present glorious constitution. On Friday, December 22, 1620, the Pilgrims made their final landing at Plymouth Rock. On Friday, February 22, George Washington, the father of American freedom, was born. On Friday, June 16, Bunker Hill was seized and fortified. On Friday, October 7, 1777, the surrender of Saratoga was made, which had such power and influence in inducing France to declare for our cause. On Friday, October 19, 1781, the surrender at Yorktown, the crowning glory of the American arms, occurred. On Friday, July 7, 1776, the motion in congress was made by John Adams, seconded by Richard Henry Lee, that the United States colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent.' We have not verified these dates; but supposing them to be correct, they certainly send Friday up to a premium, so far as America is concerned. But we do not want any premiums: all we ask is—*fair-play for Friday.*

WAR-DECORATIONS.

The Victoria Medal, given by our gracious Queen to the distinguished *braves* of the French army, seems to have inspired no less gratitude and enthusiasm than the crosses and medals so liberally bestowed by Napoleon I. We read that the ribbons by which they are suspended have begun to get shabby, but the present emperor has graciously given orders that the wearers shall be supplied with fresh ones at the public expense every three months. This reminds us of a more eccentric thoughtfulness of the kind on the part of his great predecessor. It was in the year 1809, after the victory of Ebersberg, between Linz and Vienna, that the emperor took up his quarters in a cottage, half destroyed by fire; and a private soldier, named Jean Coluche, was posted as sentry at the door, in company with a soldier of the Imperial Guard, with strict orders to allow no one to go in or out, unless accompanied by a staff-officer. About dusk, a figure enveloped in a gray overcoat quitted the ruined cottage. 'You can't pass here,' cried Coluche. Wrapped in thought, and with his arms folded, Napoleon, for it was he, continued to walk on towards the sentry. Coluche at once brought his musket to the charge, and cried out: 'You can't pass: not if you were the Little Corporal himself. Another step, and my bayonet is in your breast!' At the noise of this challenge, the generals and staff-officers came up; Napoleon re-entered the house; and poor Coluche was carried off to the guard-house. 'All up with you, my boy!' said his comrades; 'you have insulted the emperor, and they'll make an example of you, depend upon it.' 'Wait a bit—wait a bit,' replied Coluche; 'wasn't it my orders? I'll explain all that before the court-martial.' Without delay he was summoned to the presence of the emperor. He entered, and saluted with his hand to his cap. 'Grenadier,' said Napoleon, 'you may henceforward wear the red ribbon at your button-hole: I give you the cross of the legion of honour.' 'Thanks, emperor,' replied Coluche; 'but there are no shops in this country to buy the ribbon.' 'Never mind,' said the emperor; 'take a piece of stuff out of the first red petticoat you meet: that will answer the purpose.'

THE SWEET-SEDGE.

BY THE LATE MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.*

['In former days, the sweet-sedge (*Acorus calamus*) was used in the garlands hung in churches or dwellings. From time immemorial, it has been used for strewing the floors of the cathedral of Norwich, and been thrown on some of the adjoining streets on the day of choosing the mayor of that city. When trodden on, its fragrance becomes stronger, and the old cathedral seems filled with incense.'—ANNE PRATT's *Plants of Great Britain.*]

Oh, river-side,
Where soft green rushes bear dark flowers,
And reedy grasses weave dark bowers,
Through which fleet minnows glide—
Oh, river-banks, let me from you convey
Something to scatter in yon ancient minster gray.

Oh, minster gray!
Where graves of friends beloved are found,
I come to thee with strewments.—Round
Each blade of grass, each spray
Of Acorus, a fragrant essence breathes,
Nature's own incense shed to sanctify these wreaths!

Oh, rushes green,
With blossoms wan or brown!—and ye
Sweet flags, from whose scent-roots to me
Come thoughts of the Has Been,
Ye are the fitting plants at eve to shed
A vague mysterious perfume o'er the silent dead!

'Not so!—not so!'
A voice replies: 'For joy alone
These reeds and rushes here are strewn!'
But I again cry: 'Lo!
Joy's emblems here I fitly use, to prove
That life and death alike spring from God's holy love.'

HOW TO IMPART ODOUR TO FLOWERS.

Every day, man is extending his empire over external nature. Flowers, more especially, spring at his bidding in forms and colours so much richer and more beautiful than the original type, that he might almost boast them for his own. He has now gone a step further: he has acquired the art of imparting odour to the most scentless—thus constraining those beautiful things to delight the sense of smell as well as sight. A florist of Aricia, as we are informed by the *Emporio Italiano*, has made completely successful experiments of this kind in heaping over the roots of flowers an odoriferous compost, and thus producing the required scent. By means, for instance, of a decoction of roses, he has given to the rhododendron the perfect odour of the rose. 'To insure success, however, the seeds themselves of the plant to which it is desired to impart fragrance should be acted upon. Let them be immersed for two or three days in any essence that may be preferred, and then thoroughly dry them in the shade, and shortly after sow them. This operation is to give scent to those plants which have none whatever. But if it is required to substitute one scent for another natural to the plant, it is necessary to double or triple the quantity of the essence; and besides preparing the seed, it will be well to modify the nutritive substance. In order to retain the perfume, it will be necessary to repeat the moistening with the odorous substance several days during the spring-season, for two or three consecutive years. Fragrance may be given at the will of the horticulturist to any plant or tree, by boring a hole from one side of the stem to the other, or through the roots, and introducing the odoriferous ingredients into the hole.'

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* The sudden and untimely death of this amiable and estimable man will spread much grief throughout a wide circle of 'the gentle and the good.'

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THE BEARDS OF OUR FATHERS.

ONE of the conventional semi-slang phrases of the day, not long since stereotyped upon our ductile language by the powerful agency of the diurnal press, is contained in the words, 'a great fact.' If we recollect rightly, it was first used by the *Times*, a few years ago, when that colossal paper condescended to recognise the existence, and rapidly increasing influence, of an important political movement. Destined to cruise in the pleasant waters of polite literature, this happy Journal ever avoids the boisterous billows of political partisanship; yet even in these pages another 'great fact' may be noticed; and though it has not organised a powerful league, raised large sums of money, published reams of tracts, nor spouted from a thousand platforms, still its existence—whether for an age or for all time, for weal or wo, for encomium or ridicule—cannot possibly be denied. So obvious, indeed, is this 'great fact,' so portentous are its accompaniments, that even he who runs may observe it. Without opening a book, without unfolding a newspaper, without a word being spoken, we may distinctly recognise its unmistakable expression on the faces of our fellow-men, be they where they may. In court or camp, church or council-chamber, market or mansion, parliament or pot-house, street or station, stage-coach or steam-boat—everywhere, in short, we are daily bearded by this novel, physiognomical sign of the times. Still, it is perfectly unobtrusive, the very remarkable circumstance being strictly true, that however gentish and impudent its followers may previously have been, their bitterest enemies cannot now term them barefaced. Need we say more! The important feature, the head question, that, countenanced by so many, agitates the face of society at the present day is our 'great fact'—the beard-movement.

Now, we are not going, neither do we consider it our province, to enter into the disputed case of beard *versus* razor—whether a man should, in Shakspeare's words, be 'bearded like the pard,' or

> Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin, new reaped,
> Shew like a stubble-land at harvest-home.

No, our principal aim is to give some account of the beards of our fathers, for the benefit of the would-be beard-wearers of the rising generation; to endeavour to impress upon their minds a strong sense of that self-respect towards themselves, and courtesy to others, which the high and honourable antiquity of the beard, and the grave, dignified, and learned associations connected with it, so forcibly suggest. Nay, more; we would even point out the different modes of wearing that natural ornament of the face which prevailed among our ancestors, for the information, not only of the beard-wearers, but also of the barbers—we beg pardon, gentlemen—hair-dressers, we should say, of the present time. What, indeed, do the latter know about trimming a beard, except to cut it smooth off with a razor! All the beards we have met with, since the movement has commenced, are of the same stamp and pattern, without the slightest approach to originality or expression. Certes, we might as well ask a bombardier of the horse-artillery to handle a catapult, or a drill-sergeant of the Coldstream Guards to 'clap i' the clout at twelve score and carry a fore-hand shaft a fourteen and a half,' like that famous archer old Double, whom John of Gaunt loved so well, and of whom Justice Shallow prated so garrulously—as ask a tonsor of the present day to trim a beard in the Roman T, pique devant, spade, or any other of the various styles our ancestors so tastefully delighted in.

Morgan, the quaint, old heraldic writer, in his *Sphere of Gentry*, and in all seriousness too, informs us that Adam was the first gentleman who introduced fur, or, as it is technically termed, *vair*, into heraldry, he having adopted a sur-coat made of the hairy skins of beasts, after his marriage with Eve, whose arms he bore as an *escotcheon of pretence*, she being an heiress. Now, as the wearers of skin seldom shave so closely as the wearers of broadcloth, we may assume that Adam wore his beard. This opinion is strengthened by a remark of the English Josephus—no great authority, however—who, when speaking of the form of Adam's beard, says he must have worn it long; that is, a long time, before Tubal Cain had made a razor wherewith to shave it. It may be as well, however, to leave the antediluvians to themselves. Aaron, we learn, wore a forked beard, which was anointed with butter, like the head of Mr Mansfield Parkyns, the Abyssinian Brummel. The Theban Ammon-ra wore a narrow elongated beard, as Egyptian monuments testify; and the indomitable energy of Layard has made evident to us, as a nation of shopkeepers, the extraordinary demand for curling-tongs which must have existed among the ancient Assyrians, from the elaborate manner in which they dressed their beards. In short, from the earliest antiquity, the beard has been highly esteemed as an emblem of dignity and wisdom.

Homer, in terms of the warmest admiration, speaks of the snow-white beards of Priam and Nestor. Virgil, with all the ardour of a poet, descants on the flowing beard which covered the breast of Mezentius. Pliny, the Younger, seems to take a pleasure in relating how the flaxen beard of Euphrates, the Syrian philosopher, inspired his fellow-countrymen with the most respectful veneration. Persius, convinced that the beard was the symbol of all wisdom and knowledge, considered that he could not bestow a higher encomium on Socrates than terming him *magistrum barbatum*—the bearded master.

When Louis XIII. ascended the throne of France, a mere lad, the supple courtiers shaved off their beards in compliment to the youthful king. But shortly afterwards, circumstances of danger and difficulty arising, the court was compelled to solicit the assistance and advice of the distinguished soldier and statesman, Sully. The brave old warrior disdaining to conform to what he considered an effeminate custom, wore a beard of magnificent dimensions, and was consequently a conspicuous object among the close-cropped courtiers, who greeted his unfashionable appearance with sneers and contemptuous laughter. Sully, unabashed by such demonstrations, advanced to the king, and said: 'Sire, when your father, of glorious memory, did me the honour to consult me on grave affairs of state, he first dismissed the buffoons and stage-dancers from the presence-chamber.'

The succession of the boy-king, Philip V., to the crown of Spain, had an exactly similar effect upon the beard; but, as a proof of the estimation in which it was held, its suppression gave rise to a well-known Spanish proverb, 'Desde que no hay barba, no hay mas alma'—(Since we have lost our beards, we have also lost our souls.)

Even among the lowest classes, the beard was formerly considered to be the symbol of wisdom and command. In Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy, *The Beggar's Bush*—or Fletcher's rather, for it was written after Beaumont's death, and acted, for the first time, before the court in 1622—when Oswin, a stranger, has, at the beggars' request, chosen the one who had the longest beard to be their king, Higgen, the beggar-orator, thus addresses the new-made monarch:

> But what need presage
> To us, that might have read it in thy beard,
> As well as he that chose thee? By that beard,
> Thou wert found out and marked for sovereignty.
> Oh happy beard! but happier prince whose beard
> Was so remarked, as marked out our prince,
> Not bating us a hair.

The most sacred oath of the Mohammedan is, 'by the beard of the Prophet;' and when a 'turbaned Turk' suspects that any one is trying to humbug him, the expressive inquiry, 'Do you mean to laugh at my beard?' is tantamount to the Englishman's, 'Do you see anything green about me?' This is also the signification of the old phrase, 'making a beard,' we find in Chaucer. In the reeve's tale, the miller says:

> I trow the clerks were afeared,
> Yet can a miller make a clerk's beard,
> For all his art.

In the olden time, when an inferior was addressing a person of higher rank, or when a person was soliciting a favour, it was always the custom to stroke the beard downwards, as a token of inferiority, deference, or entreaty. Butler, who seems to have never missed the slightest shade of manner or character, represents Hudibras making submissive congees to the widow:

> And all due ceremonies paid,
> He stroked his beard, and thus he said.

This observance is as ancient as Homer: we read in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, when Dolon is earnestly supplicating Diomede for mercy:

> Sternly he spoke, and as the wretch prepared,
> With humble blandishment, to stroke his beard,
> Like lightning swift, the wrathful falchion flew.

The custom is also alluded to in that most amusing episode in *Don Quixote*, where the fictitious Trifaldin, of the white beard, squire to the equally fictitious, disconsolate matron, implores assistance from the knight of the woful countenance. 'He coughed,' says the author, 'and stroked his unwieldy beard from top to bottom with both hands.'

How much more graceful a gesture this is, than the ridiculous and unmeaning mock-hand-washing manœuvre, so regularly performed by tavern-waiters and walking-gentlemen! Even our tragedians overlook this graceful, natural expression of submission and deferential appeal, though they have the high authority of Shakspeare for it. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Ulysses describes Patroclus mimicking the Grecian warriors for the amusement of Achilles, and the latter saying:

> Now play me Nestor—hem and stroke thy beard,
> As he, being dressed to some oration.

Probably this gesture arose from the beard being frequently consecrated, as a most precious offering, to the heathen deities. Chaucer, in the knight's tale, describes Arcite as offering his beard to Mars, in the following words:

> And evermore until the day I die,
> Eternal fire I will before thee find:
> And eke to this avow, I will me bind,
> My beard, my hair that hangeth long adown,
> That never yet felt no offension
> Of razor nor of shears, I will thee give,
> And be thy true servant while I live.

Our Saxon ancestors delighted in wearing long forked beards; the Normans, on the contrary, at the period of the Conquest, not only shaved their chins, but also the back parts of their heads. They had not, however, been long established in England before they permitted their beards to grow to extravagant dimensions. The long beards, painted hoods, and gray coats of the English were thus satirised by some Scottish visitors to London in the reign of Richard I.:

> Long beards heartless,
> Painted hoods witless,
> Gray coats graceless,
> Make England thriftless.

From the time of Henry IV., the beard began to decrease in size and popularity; and growing fine by degrees and beautifully less during the long and disastrous commotions of the Wars of the Roses, became almost extinct, until it was once more called into existence by the Reformation. Yes, doubtful reader, by the Reformation. Small events may arise from great causes, as well as great events from small causes; and thus it was how that ever-memorable occurrence affected the beard.

After the separation of the Greek and Latin Churches, the practice of shaving became a religious duty among the Roman ecclesiastics, by way of opposition to the Greeks, who, to this day, have continued to pay reverence to a well-clad chin, and are greatly shocked by the beardless images of saints in the Latin churches. The shaving of the chin by the clergy was imperatively commanded by various statutes in the Romish Church; and so strictly were these statutes adhered to, that Duprat, Bishop of Clermont, daring to break them, found one Easter-Sunday morning the doors of his own cathedral shut in his face. But three dignitaries of the chapter were awaiting him in the porch, one holding a razor, another a pair of scissors, and the third an open book, containing the statutes of the church, with his finger pointing to the words *barbis rasis*. In vain did the bishop urge the sinfulness of shaving on so holy a day; he was not listened to. Prevented from entering the cathedral, he returned home with his beard, and in a short time died of a broken heart.

By the monastic laws, the lay-monks were commanded to let their beards grow, and only the priests to shave; and a writer, previous to the Reformation, complains that the manners of the clergy had become so corrupt, that they could not be distinguished from the laity by their actions, but only by their want of beards. Consequently, the early reformers suffered their beards to grow, to distinguish themselves from the adherents to Rome; and the Reformation becoming general in England, the beard by this means came into fashion among the clergy.

Verheiden's portraits of the Reformation afford us some good specimens of beards. Beza wore his long and forked; Calvin's was long and pointed, with a slight waving curl; Fox and Cranmer wore goodly appendages to their chins; but John Knox eclipsed all his contemporaries, his beard flowing down to his girdle. These reverend fathers did not wish to concede the use of the beard to the laity, considering that it should be the distinguishing feature of the ecclesiastic alone.

The archæological inquirers of a future era, thanks to the still-increasing triumphs of the graver's art, will have an easy task when tracing the modes and costumes of our days. A few copies of *Punch* or the *Illustrated News* preserved from oblivion, will make the all-round collar and the alpaca poncho, the wide-awake hat and the Wellington boot, the paletôt and the Paxton, almost as familiar to our descendants as those brilliant triumphs of æsthetic invention are to ourselves. We, however, when looking back among the dim shadows of antiquity, have no such advantage; in the earlier periods of our history, we are able to trace the form of the beard only in hideous pre-Raphaelitish figures, worked on tawdry threadbare tapestry, or on the sculptured stones and brasses that uncouthly represent the living forms of the dead, to whose memory they were erected. From the reign of Elizabeth, however, the dawning of the modern drama, as the dramatic writers, those brief chroniclers of the times, hold their mirrors up to nature, we are enabled to glean a few reflections; and the satirists, too, when vigorously lashing, afford us many glimpses of the fashions and follies of their era. Holinshed, writing about the middle of the sixteenth century, says:

'Neither will I meddle with our variety of beards, of which some are shaven from the chin, like those of the Turks, not a few cut short like to the beard of Marquis Otto; some made round, like a rubbing-brush; other with a pique devant (Oh, fine fashion!), or now and then suffered to grow long; and the barbers being grown to be so cunning in this behalf as the tailors. Therefore, if a man have a lean and straight face, a Marquis of Otto's cut will make it broad and large; if it be platter-like, a long slender beard will make it seem the narrower; if he be weasel-beaked, then much hair left on the cheeks will make the owner look like a bowdled hen, and so grim as a goose, if Cornelis of Chelmerford say true; many old men wear no beards at all.'

Without presuming to insinuate in the slightest degree that any of the supporters of the present beard-movement are 'weasel-beaked,' or that any amount of hair on the face would make any of them look 'so grim as a goose,' we would earnestly solicit their attention to the fact, thus alluded to by Holinshed, that our ancestors cut their beards according to the forms of their faces; and that they, if they wish to wear their beards to the adornment of their persons, must undoubtedly do the same.

In Lyly's *Midas*, published in 1591, we find one Motto, a barber, thus addressing his apprentice: 'Besides, I instructed thee in the phrases of our eloquent occupation, as—How, sir, will you be trimmed? Will you have your beard like a spade or a bodkin? a penthouse on your upper lip, or an alley on your chin? your mustaches sharp at the end, like shoemaker's awls, or hanging down to your mouth like goat's flakes?'

The spade-beard, in form like the iron part of a spade, was that mostly worn by soldiers. At a period when almost all men wore swords, and those weapons were frequently drawn to decide very trifling quarrels —in an age, we may say, of 'difficulties,' as our transatlantic brethren mildly term combats *à l'outrance*, a beard cut to look terrible to an enemy was probably no small advantage to the wearer. Shirley, however, in *A Contention for Honour and Riches*, written about 1630, shews that the terrible beard had not always a terrific effect:

> *Soldier*. You have worn a sword thus long to shew the hilt,
> Now let the blade appear.
> *Courtier*. Good Captain Voice,
> I shall, and teach you manners; I have yet
> No ague; I can look upon your buff
> And punto beard, and call for no strong waters.

The spade-beard, however, was not always the distinguishing mark of a soldier: the unfortunate Earl of Essex wore a spade; but his friend Lord Southampton, the patron of Shakspeare, who passed a great part of his life in camps, wore the long slender tuft of hair, diminishing to a point, termed the stiletto-beard. But the fashions of beards, like everything else, were always changing. One of the characters in Middleton's *Time's Metamorphosis*, exclaims to another:

> Why dost thou wear this beard?
> 'Tis clean gone out of fashion.

It is highly probable that the officers and private soldiers of an army wore their beards as their general did his. In *King Henry V.*, Gower, when enlightening Fluellen as to the true character of the cowardly braggart Pistol, says: 'And what a beard of the general's cut, and a horrid suit of the camp will do among foaming bottles and ale-washed wits, is marvellous to be thought on; but you must learn to know such slanders of the age.'

The almost endless variety of beards that were fashionable in the reign of Charles I., have been sung by Taylor in the *Superbiæ Flagellum*, though, curiously enough, he does not mention the kind of beard he himself wore. It was a corkscrew-beard, a single tuft of hair, hanging down from the centre of the chin, and twisted into a spiral form. Taylor's description of beards occupies some pages; we shall quote only the close of it:

> Some like a spade, some like a fork, some square,
> Some round, some mowed like stubble, some stark bare,
> Some sharp stiletto fashion, dagger-like,
> That may, with whispering, a man's eyes outpike;
> Some with the hammer-cut or Roman T,
> Their beards extravagant reformed must be;
> Some in the quadrate, some triangle fashion;
> Some circular, some oval in translation;
> Some perpendicular in longitude;
> Some like a thicket for their crassitude;
> That heights, depths, breadths, triforms, square, oval, round,
> And rules geometrical in beards are found.

The Roman T or hammer-cut beard was a plain tuft down the centre of the chin, the mustaches parted straight out on each side to form the cross, or upper part of the T. The beard worn by the present emperor of France is an exact Roman T, as may be verified by many old portraits. It was all the vogue in the time of Charles I., as we learn from the *Queen of Corinth:*

> He strokes his beard,
> Which now he puts i' the posture of a T,
> The Roman T; your T-beard is the fashion.

A beard somewhat resembling the spade form, but of an equal breadth throughout its length, was known as the tile-beard—a term still more appropriate when it was of a reddish colour. Thus we read in *Hudibras:*

> His tawny beard was th' equal grace
> Both of his wisdom and his face,
> In cut and dye so like a tile,
> A sudden view it would beguile.

A tile-coloured beard, however fashionable or unfashionable its shape might have been, was not by any means considered a blemish in the olden time. The exquisites of that period used to dye their dark hair and beards a light colour, as some now-a-days dye their light hair dark. In the old books of recipes or 'secrets,' as they are termed, we never meet with the modern friseur's motto, 'No more gray hairs;' on the contrary, we are told how to change black hair to gray, white, yellow, red, and even green. In the seventeenth century, the Jewish females in Holland and Flanders used to cut off their fine black hair, and wear yellow wigs instead. So much for the caprices of fashion.

We think it our duty, however, to warn the youthful reader that the ladies, even in the olden time, did not always admire the beard, especially when it was accompanied by the fumes of tobacco-smoke. A conversation similar to the following might very readily take place at the present day, though we actually extract it from Marston's *Antonio and Melida*, a comedy first acted in 1662:

> *Piero.* Faith, mad niece, I wonder when thou wilt marry.
>
> *Rosaline.* Faith, kind uncle, when men forsake taking of tobacco, and cease to wear their beards so rudely long. Oh! to have a husband with a mouth continually smoking, with a bush of furze on the ridge of his chin, ready still to flop into his foaming chops; ah! 'tis more than most intolerable.

The beard, too, was on some occasions, and might be still, a tell-tale. Ralph Kettle, preaching in St Mary's Church at Oxford, at the conclusion of his sermon said: 'But now I see it is time for me to shut up my book, for I see the doctor's men come in, wiping their beards from the ale-house.' 'He could,' says Aubrey the antiquary, 'plainly see them, and 'twas their custom to go there, and about the end of the sermon to return to wait on their masters.'

Even in its high and palmy days, the beard, when too large, was not unfrequently a subject of ridicule. In Lyly's *Midas*, we read of

> A dozen of beards
> To stuff two dozen of cushions.

And in the same play, another character says:

> All my mistress's lines that she dries her clothes on are made of moustachio stuff.

Again, Menenius, in *Coriolanus*, tells the tribunes that their 'beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle.'

In Charles II.'s time, the beard became smaller and smaller, till at last a new style of decorating the head put it entirely out of fashion: this was the detestable monstrosity termed a periwig, worn in servile imitation of the French courtiers, who wore it in servile adulation of Louis XIV. The Grand Monarque, it appears, when a boy, had a remarkably beautiful head of hair, which hung down in long waving curls upon his shoulders; and the courtiers, out of compliment to their young sovereign, had wigs made to imitate his natural locks, which obtained the name of perukes. The base subserviency of the English to the French court at that period, placed this absurd head-dress on the shoulders of English gentlemen, and the common people contemptuously termed it a periwig—a name which had previously been given to a theatrical character-wig, worn, as Hamlet says, 'by a robustious periwig-pated fellow.'

So late as the first half of the last century, some of the clergy continued to wear the beard. Clubbe, in his *Free Advice to a Young Clergyman*, written about that period, recommends him 'not to come into the Jewish fashion of wearing a beard round his face: to them [the Jews] it may be proper enough, but, with us, openness of countenance is the characteristic of an ingenuous mind.'

The periwig, after extinguishing the beard, fell into the oblivion it so well merited. Custom, tyrannical custom, still inflicts it on the heads of lawyers, its last refuge. The beard, aided perhaps more than is generally considered, by the loosely fitting forms of our present garments, seems likely to regain some of its ancient importance. But, alas! the black, inconvenient cylinder, termed a hat, still tortures our weary heads. Assuredly, a majority of the adult male population of England would accept the beard, ay, and dye it green too, if inexorable fashion required it, on condition that a new and easily worn hat were introduced at the same time.

SKY-HIEROGLYPHICS.

When the remote regions of space are reconnoitred by the help of very powerful telescopes, miniature star-systems are discerned scattered about there, some looking only like minute specks of faint cloud, on account of the collective light of their twinkling being paled down, almost to disappearance, by extreme distance; but others having distinct star-points dotted and stippled in upon their faces in various ways, so that they assume individual and characteristic forms, which can be at once recognised whenever they are encountered by astronomers.

Among these more individualised star-systems of the remote firmament, there are some twelve or fourteen which possess an especial interest on account of the intelligence which beams forth from their features. A family likeness pervades all the members of the group, the fundamental idea of the physiognomy being a spirally contorted arrangement of light streams, with scintillating balls concentered in the midst, and depending from the outer extremities of the spires. They all look very much as if they might have been whirling fireworks, whose sparks were suddenly, and as they flew, fixed into indelible fire-petrifactions. Some of these star-scrolls are viewed in full face, with all their convolutions open, like the partitions of the nautilus-shell seen in section and edgeways; others are contemplated three-quarters full, and others in profile, with the scrolls setting away from the observer. Science is indebted to the skill and perseverance of Lord Rosse for its knowledge of these strange objects. It was the noble instruments of this illustrious observer that first brought into view these star-shells of the celestial deep.

In these spiral star-systems, the scrolled or convoluted arrangement is so obvious and complete, that there can be no doubt of the peculiar figure expressing the dominant operation of some special power. The spires of these starry miniatures as much declare the active influence of some scrolling agency, as the fiery whorls of the Catharine-wheel intimate that the body which emits the sparks is in rapid revolution. Hence the discovery of the scrolled nebulæ by Lord Rosse was very soon followed by speculations, on the part of inquisitive philosophy, concerning the forces that were probably at the bottom of the scrolling. Scientific men are now pressing with great urgency the question, 'What can the meaning be that is hidden within these hieroglyphical inscriptions of the sky?' What are the proceedings of nature that are recorded by these curled and contorted characters?

The sails of a wind-mill go round because their sloping vanes are pressed laterally as the breeze sweeps along past them. But now, let it be conceived, for the sake of illustration, that the tables for once are turned upon the wind; let it be imagined that the sails are whirled round by means of machinery acting upon the central shaft within, just as the blades of the screw are whirled round by the shaft, at the stern of the screw steam-ship. Then they would be resisted by the wind, as they turned, and would have to drive currents of it out of their way, as the blades of the steam-screw drive backwards currents of water by their revolution. The sails of the wind-mill would, on this supposition, succeed in dashing the air out of their way, principally because their framework was made of strong unbending timber. But if it were formed of yielding whalebone, or India-rubber, instead of being composed of rigid timber, how would the case then stand? The elastic ribs of the sails would give way, to a certain extent, before the resistance they experienced, and would curve before it, as the whalebone frame of an umbrella curves before a violent blast of wind. The rotating mill-sails, if viewed from a distance, would then cease to look like a revolving cross, as mill-sails ordinarily do in the face of the landscape, and would assume instead the appearance of convoluted spires turning upon their centres. They would, in fact, wear the same general aspect as the scrolled nebulæ or star-systems brought to light by the researches of Lord Rosse. This, then, is what many natural philosophers are inclined to hold that these convoluted objects are. They believe them to be revolving sails, whose skeletons and ribs are of yielding consistence, instead of being composed of rigid material; so that the radiating arms get bent into spiral curves when they are whirled round in the midst of a resisting force that serves to oppose their movement.

An apparent difficulty presents itself upon the threshold of this explanation, which seems at the first glance to affect its principles in an unfavourable way: the revolving sails of a wind-mill can be seen going round; their movements can be traced by the eye; but no motion can be detected in the star-scrolls; none of them have yet perceptibly changed the positions of their spirally curved arms since the period when they first came under observation. *They* are not seen to be going round. Upon further consideration, however, this obstacle complaisantly withdraws itself out of the way. When an observer stands near to a wind-mill, the ends of the revolving sails rush past him with terrific impetuosity and speed; but if he then moves off gradually from the mill, he will observe that the sails appear to turn more and more gently, although, in fact, the velocity of their movement is in no way altered. Under this experience, the notion is soon realised, that it is altogether possible for such a thing to exist as mill-sails so vast, that although their extremities are rushing along with a speed of almost inconceivable amount, they may nevertheless be contemplated from a distance at which the revolutionary progress ceases to be perceptible during any interval of time that can be employed in observation. If the star-scrolls be revolving spiral sails, it is obvious that they really must stand in this precise category. It is known that their stupendous forms extend through distances light could not flash across in thousands of years, although it passes round the earth six times in a second; and that, consequently, if the outer extremities of their spires were sweeping onwards with a velocity many times greater than that with which the iron ball flies from the mouth of the cannon, that velocity would nevertheless be altogether inappreciable to observers watching it from minute to minute, and from day to day. So enormous must the circles be through which those celestial mill-sails wheel, that they can only be completed in intervals of thousands upon thousands of years, whatever may be the speed of the movement. In such a state of affairs, it is manifest that short-lived man must watch in vain for any indication of the mighty progress. Its almost infinite march must, of necessity, altogether elude the finite sense that endures but for a few short years.

Having summarily disposed, then, of this weighty difficulty, three other very important considerations next arise: What is the nature of the movement wherewith these gigantic firmamental mill-sails are wheeled round? what is the character of the resistance that curves their huge arms? and what is the composition of these arms, that they are strong enough to hold together, and yet pliable enough to bend to the pressure? We want to know, what are those firmamental mill-sails made of? why are they spirally bent? and why do they whirl?

The most direct road to the solution of these queries lies nearer home than the far-off regions in which the strange objects themselves are placed. Bring back your attention, for a brief interval, to the earth—What is that body? It is both very large and very heavy. Take a million of tons of some solid substance, like iron ore—that is, as many tons as it would require eleven days and a half to count, if one ton were reckoned off every second—place them all in a heap; then make a million such heaps, and lump them all together as a billion of tons. Next form as many billion heaps as there are individual tons in the lump, add one quarter as much again, and roll up the whole into a ball. There you will have the earth, so far as massiveness is concerned. The terrestrial sphere weighs a billion and a quarter of billions of tons!

But how is this ponderous ball sustained in space? Where is the pillar upon which its enormous bulk is laid? or where are the chains by which it is suspended? Go round the earth from east to west, and from north to south, and you will see nowhere any material support. All is transparency and void, until the eye reaches the far-removed orbs which gleam in the remote firmament. The earth is an island of matter, in the ocean of immensity, with only waves of impalpable and incoherent ether breaking upon its shores.

As might be anticipated, then, since this ponderous sphere is not supported in space, it is falling through it, sweeping along onwards, and still onwards, for ever, with fearful impetuosity. The speed of its movement is sixty-eight times as great as that of a ball shot from a rifle; ninety times as great as the velocity of sound; and *eleven thousand times* as great as the speed of the express railway-train! The earth performs a surprising journey of nearly sixty-eight thousand miles every hour.

But whither is the earth falling? To what point does its rapid movement tend? Its own inherent tendency of movement is towards the next very large substantial body that lies out in space as its next-door neighbour. It endeavours to fall to that neighbouring body, as a small stone strives always to fall to it, when raised away from the terrestrial surface. It has been arranged by the Creative fiat which established the order of nature, that all heavy bodies shall act as magnets towards each other. Each one draws, and is drawn by, all the rest. If a series of heavy bodies, like the earth, were simultaneously set down in different situations in space, and then were abandoned there, free from external control, they would all immediately rush together under the influence of this magnet-like attraction.

The nearest very large substantial body that lies out in space, as a next-door neighbour to the earth, is the sun. This neighbour is a very large sphere indeed; it has in itself a bulk that is equal to a million and a half of earths, and it consequently plays the part of a proportionally powerful magnet to its terrestrial companion. If the earth were abandoned to the influence of this mighty magnet, it would of necessity be drawn to the sun, and would find itself held fast there after a few hours' rapid flight. It is not, however, abandoned to the solar attraction, for it was primevally *thrown* into space, so to speak, and not set down there; and it was thrown in such a direction that its own momental impulse carried it, not *towards* the sun, but *across the direction* in which the sun forthwith began to pull it. The consequence was, that it went on moving, neither in the line in which it was launched by the Creative hand, nor yet in the direction along which the sun pulled it, but in a course that was intermediate to, or compounded of both. This, then, is how the ponderous earth is sustained without material upholding. It is sustained by the combined influence of movement and attraction. It is rushing along with the momental force with which its vast mass was originally launched into space; but as it is doing so, it is caught in the strings of the sun's attractive energy, and is made to whirl round the sun, as a stone is caused to whirl round the head of a slinger, by the strings of the sling. The earth's onward momental movement is diverted into a whirl round the sun by the solar attraction. The ponderous earth is falling *round the sun in a circle*, or, more correctly speaking, in an ellipse, that for ever returns very nearly into itself.

But upon what is the yet more ponderous sun pillared or hung in its turn? The sun, too, hangs upon nothing. It is falling through space. With its dependent earth, it is rushing along for ever with a speed sufficient to carry it through the vast distance of one hundred and fifty-four millions of miles in the course of a year. As, however, it is doing so, it, too, is caught in the strings of attraction, and is made to whirl round, instead of flying onward. It is whirling round large orbs like to itself, which, nevertheless, on account of extreme remoteness, look to human eyes only like twinkling stars.

What is true in regard to the earth and the sun, is also true of the other material members of the universe. All the bright stars are wheeling through space, rushing onwards with the momenta primarily impressed upon their several masses, but gracefully bending round each other as they do so, under the influence of mutual attraction. The stellar orbs are sustained in space in precisely the same way as the earth and the sun: motion and attraction uphold them as securely as if they were hung in material chains. The twinkling stars which are scattered so confusedly in the nocturnal firmament, are all connected into a system by the meshes of mutual attraction, but are continually keeping the threads of those meshes stretched by their gyratory energies. They cannot fly asunder, because each is restrained by the magnet-like hold of its neighbours; they cannot rush together, because each is impelled by innate impulse of great power another way: consequently, they all sweep round and round, like drops in a mighty whirlpool. If some superhuman intelligence, freed from the restrictions of space and time, could rest on the far shore of the immensity, and look back, in sustained contemplation, upon the twinkling brotherhood, it would see this star-whirlpool dimpling the even face of the firmament, as man sees the watery eddies dimpling the smooth face of the mill-pool.

Even so when the astronomer, aided by the telescope, looks out into surrounding space, he sees dimples on the face of the firmament, caused by eddies of stars. He has not time, it is true, to follow the movement, but he sees the fact of the movement in the form of the eddy. Those spiral scrolls discovered by Lord Rosse are eddies of stars caught in the act of gyration. The elastic and flexible connection that holds together the spiral arms, is the magnet-like attraction of star for star; the resistance that curves the arms into spires, is the preponderance of the magnet-like attraction in the direction in which most stars are concentrated at the time; and the movement which produces the whirl, is the impulse communicated to the stars by the hand of the Creator. The stars in the distant and external systems, detected beyond the utmost boundaries of the earth's more immediate star-group, are sustained in space by precisely the same agency as those nearer bodies.

Such is the interpretation the Daniels of science now offer as the correct reading of these scroll-hieroglyphics. They tell us that, in those spiral nebulæ stars are seen, hanging in clusters upon each other like bees in a swarm, yet kept from actual contact by the rapidity with which they are eddying. Streaks and knobs of superior brilliancy appear wherever the whirling stars set in more closely together for the time. In the rich depths of the universe there are, in all probability, star-systems of every degree of diversity. In some, for instance, the several orbs are swept in concentric ellipses round a common focus, as the planets roll in concentric orbits around the sun. In others, the stars are rushing along in every direction, layer over layer, spherically arranged, as shell beyond shell; and in yet others, subordinate dimples are circling in more comprehensive revolutions, just as the satellites are whirling about the planets, and the planets about the sun.

But it by no means follows that any of these star-systems are of fixed and unalterable character; it is far more accordant with the plan of cyclical progression which seems to be of such general prevalence in the universe, that the condition present in either of them at any one time is but a single figure in a mazy dance that passes on through a long series of changes, at length to return again and again upon itself, exactly as each varied configuration of the planets and satellites is renewed after prolonged periods. The spiral scrolls, indeed, look to the eye as if they were unrolling their star-streams. Possibly, myriads of centuries hence, they will have expanded themselves into hollow rings; and then, after yet other myriads of centuries, will be found recondensed into compact spherical clusters, in their turn once more to unroll into spires. It is a very remarkable fact, that hollow-ring star-systems, and spherically compacted systems are discerned in the firmament, just as if different members of the same organisation were exhibited to the eye in the successive stages of their progress of change, to compensate for man's inability to trace out the progress of the change in any individual case.

SCHOOLS CHEAP AND NASTY.

The schoolmaster is a rising man in our age. It may be safely said that, in income and in social consideration, he is at twice the height he was in the early years of this century. Yet the *Times* continues to inform us of instances in which the expectations of this functionary appear quite as low as ever, if they are not indeed lower. Take the following examples selected from a late number:

> Education sixteen guineas per annum.—A lady keeping a highly respectable establishment, offers to receive a few young ladies on these reduced terms, including Music, Drawing, and French. House very large, with excellent playground. School-room, 40 by 18 feet. Tradesmen's daughters taken in exchange. Unexceptionable references. Address with real name, &c.

In the next column we find a similar one, only young gentlemen are advertised for, and the terms are a little lower than in the above:

> Education sixteen pounds per annum (no extras).—Parents of limited income and those having large families are invited to address the advertiser. The education embraces the Latin, Greek, French, and German languages, the Mathematics and English generally. The house is spacious, standing in its own beautiful and extensive pleasure-grounds. A liberal table is kept, and every domestic comfort may be depended on. References to parents of pupils now at the school.

In a third, taken from the same page, an offer is made to *board*, *clothe*, and *educate* young gentlemen for L.18 per annum; and numbers of others may be found even within the limits of the same paper, offering board and an education including numerous accomplishments, on terms varying from this sum to L.25 a year.

One can hardly think that Mr Dickens's Dotheboys Hall is an overdrawn picture, or that such establishments as the one kept by Mr Squeers have ceased to exist, when we read such advertisements as the above. The age in which we live, philanthropical as it may be, is not so overflowing with the commodity that a crowd of benevolent individuals are to be found willing and eager to educate the children of other people at the cost of their own pockets; and yet a little analysis will shew that education on such terms cannot otherwise be given.

Let us calculate the cost of a pupil fed in the plainest manner, and at the least possible expense—but not actually dipping under the starving-point—for forty weeks out of the fifty-two, allowing the remaining twelve for vacations. Let us suppose this child to have three meals a day—a number parents have a predilection for as the minimum; and that the morning and evening repast cost sixpence *together*: these meals alone, for 280 days, will take L.7 out of the annual stipend. Dinner, with however small a quantity of animal food, could not be supplied for the same sum; but calculating it to cost a fraction above fourpence per day (including the luscious vehicle of the sulphur), L.5 more will be required; so that at least L.12 per annum must be expended in the actual cost of food. But it is not only food that has to be provided, but lodging. The veriest outcasts on the face of the earth pay threepence a night for bare shelter, with a couch of straw, not particularly clean. Allow but the same for the lodging of your child night and day, and L.3, 10s. more is expended out of the sixteen guineas named in the first advertisement. At this computation, which certainly does not admit of anything very luxurious either in food or accommodation, twenty-six shillings will remain to pay for the instruction of the young ladies for the year, including music, drawing, and French. In the second advertisement, in which pounds are mentioned instead of guineas, the sum of ten shillings per annum remains to pay for the education, 'which embraces Latin, Greek, French, and German; mathematics and English generally.' In the third, as clothing is offered, in addition to board, lodging, and education, for L.2 a year more, we may consider there is no very important difference in the terms.

But it is not only for what has been already mentioned that the head of an educational establishment must look for remuneration; in the first place, some capital is necessary to take and furnish a house large enough for scholastic purposes; and let the furniture be of the very plainest and most homely description that can be procured, it will still cost something. Of course, for this capital expended, interest must be looked for. Then there is the actual rent of a large house and grounds—if the advertisement can be credited which describes them—the wages and food of servants, with other items almost innumerable. All this is positive outlay, independently of the educational part of the bargain. Supposing the master to be so admirable a Crichton as to be able to teach all the varied branches of learning himself, and the lady-principal so completely *finished* as to undertake the whole conduct of the school, accomplishments included, surely the time of such talented persons is worth a trifle. They should at least earn a living by exercising these powers; and not only that, but some little return might naturally be expected, by way of interest, for the sums spent in fitting them for the position they occupy. But as it can scarcely be thought that a single head, with the pair of hands which usually—not always—accompany it, will be able, unaided, to go through the whole work of a school, suppose an assistant to be employed. This does not always imply that the individual is paid; for, referring again to the columns of the *Times*, we find advertisements inserted by persons at least professing to be able to teach a great deal, and stating their willingness to do so without any other remuneration for their services than simply board and lodging, or, to use the prescriptive term, 'a comfortable home.' The teacher, however, even when receiving no salary whatever, must cost the principal at least as much as one of the pupils.

Now comes the question, how are all these expenses met? Sometimes we hear of additional items of various kinds inserted in the bills, which so swell their amount as to make the concern pay in spite of the apparent lowness of the charge; but in one of these advertisements we see the ominous words, 'No extras;' so we are driven from that idea in despair.

And yet some profit must be obtained out of the miserable pittances quoted, or why are such pupils thought not only worth having, but advertised for? Advertisements, it is true, are now pretty cheap; but being frequently, almost constantly, repeated by the philanthropical educators of juvenile England, they must cost a good deal in the aggregate.

That it is quite impossible for a teacher, in such circumstances, to fulfil his bargain honestly to himself and his employers, must be apparent. Yet I should almost blame more than the school-speculators, the parent who committed his child into such hands without making any calculation as to whether the other party in the bargain *can* be reasonably expected to fulfil his share of the contract. This, however, is often the last thing thought of; the main object being to have their children taken entirely off the parents' hands, and brought up with as little trouble and expense to themselves as possible. That there is a great demand for these cheap schools is evidenced by the number of advertisements, similar in class to those cited, which appear daily in the provincial papers as well as the *Times* and other metropolitan journals.

It would be amusing, were it not for the ideas of a different nature which are also suggested by them, to notice such sentences—as, for instance, this, from one of the advertisements given above: 'Parents of large families and of limited income are invited to address the advertiser;' and again, 'Tradesmen's daughters taken in exchange.' The family should indeed be large if a member is condemned to be educated and boarded on such terms. The remark as regards 'tradesmen's daughters' is, to say the least of it, a little ambiguous. Are they to be taken in exchange for the children of the school, the deficiency of the latter in flesh being made up for in learning? Or are the olive branches of the tradesman to be done for in payment of his account for the goods he deals in? If this is the true explanation—and we suspect it is so, notwithstanding the absurdity of the phrase 'children taken in exchange'—the advertisements are doubtless meant exclusively for the dealers in adulterations and imitations, as articles of any quality whatever will fully remunerate the school for such board and education.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.—NO COVER.

In silence I continued to scrutinise the camp, but could discover no mode of approaching it secretly or in safety.

As I have said, the adjacent plain, for nearly a thousand yards' radius, was a smooth grass-covered prairie. Even the grass was short; it would scarcely have sheltered the smallest game, much less afford cover for the body of a man—much less for that of a horse.

I should willingly have crawled on hands and knees over the half-mile that separated us from the encampment; but that would have been of no service; I might just as well have walked erect. Erect or prostrate, I should be seen all the same by the occupants of the camp, or the guards of the horses. Even if I succeeded in effecting an entrance within the lines, what then? Even should I succeed in finding Isolina, what hope was there of our getting off?

There was no probability of our being able to leave the lines unseen—not the least. We should certainly be pursued, and what chance for us to escape? It was not probable we could run for a thousand yards with the hue and cry after us? No; we should be overtaken, recaptured, speared or tomahawked upon the spot!

The design I had formed was to bring my horse as close as possible to the Indian lines; to leave him under cover, and within such a distance as would make it possible to reach him by a run; then mounting with my betrothed in my arms, to gallop to my comrades. These I had intended should be placed in ambush, as near to the camp as the nature of the ground would permit.

But my preconceived plan was entirely frustrated by the peculiar situation of the Indian encampment. I had anticipated that there would be either trees, brushwood, or broken ground in its neighbourhood, under shelter of which we might approach. To my chagrin, there was none of the three. There was no timber nearer than the grove in which we were lying—the copse excepted—and to have reached this would have been to enter the camp itself.

We appeared to have advanced to the utmost limit possible that afforded cover. A few feet further would have carried us outside the margin of the timber; and then we should have been as conspicuous to the denizens of the camp, as they now were to us. Forward we dared not stir—not a step further.

I was puzzled and perplexed. Once more I turned my eyes upon the sky, but I drew not thence a ray of hope; the heavens were too bright; the sun had gone down in the west; but in the east was rising, full, round, and red, almost his counterpart. How I should have welcomed an eclipse! I thought of omnipotent power; I thought of the command of the Israelitish captain. I should have joyed to see the shadow of the opaque earth pass over that shining orb, and rob it of its borrowed light, if only for a single hour!

Eclipse or cloud there was none—no prospect of one or other—no hope either from the earth or the sky.

Verily, then, must I abandon my design, and adopt some other for the rescue of my betrothed? What other? I could think of none: there was no other that might be termed a plan. We might gallop forward, and openly attack the camp? Sheer desperation alone could impel to such a course, and the result would be ruin to all—to her among the rest. We could not hope to rescue her—nine to a hundred—for we saw and could now count our dusky foemen. They would see us afar off; would be prepared to receive us—prepared to hurl their masses upon us—to destroy us altogether. Sheer desperation!

What other plan?—what—— Something of one occurred to me at that moment: a slight shadow of it had crossed my mind before. It seemed practicable, though fearfully perilous; but what of peril? It was not the time, nor was I in the mood, to regard danger. Anything short of the prospect of certain death had no terror for me then; and even this I should have preferred to failure.

We had along with us the horse of the captive Comanche. Stanfield had brought the animal, having left his own in exchange. My new design was to mount the Indian horse, and ride him into the camp. In this consisted the whole of my newly conceived scheme.

Surely the idea was a good one—a slight alteration of my original plan. I had already undertaken to play the *rôle* of an Indian warrior, while within the camp; it would only require me to begin the personation outside the lines, and make my *entrée* along with my *début*. There would be more dramatic appropriateness, with a proportionate increase of danger. But I did not jest thus; I had no thought of merriment at the time. The travesty I had undertaken was no burlesque.

The worst feature of this new scheme was the increased risk of being brought in contact with the friends of this warrior of the red hand—of being accosted by them, and of course expected to make reply. How could I avoid meeting them—one or more of them? If interrogated, how shun making answer? I knew a few words of the Comanche tongue, but not enough to hold a conversation in it. Either my false accent or my voice would betray me! True, I might answer in Spanish. Many of the Comanches speak this language; but my using it would appear a suspicious circumstance.

There was another source of apprehension: I could not confide in the Indian horse. He had endeavoured to fling Stanfield all along the way—kicking violently, and biting at his rider while seated upon his back. Should he behave in a similar manner with me while entering the camp, it would certainly attract the attention of the Indians. It would lead to scrutiny and suspicion.

Still another fear: even should I succeed in the main points—in entering the camp, finding the captive, and wresting her from the hands of her jailers—how after? I could never depend upon this capricious mustang to carry us clear of the pursuit—there would be others as swift, perhaps swifter than he, and we should only be carried back to die. Oh! that I could have taken my own steed near to the line of yonder guard—oh! that I could have hidden him there!

It might not be; I saw that it could not be; and I was forced to abandon all thought of it.

I had well-nigh made up my mind to risk all the chances of my assumed character, by mounting the Indian horse. To my comrades I imparted the idea, and asked their counsel.

All regarded it as fraught with danger; one or two advised me against it. They were those who did not understand my motives—who could not comprehend the sentiment of love—who knew not the strength and courage which that noble passion may impart. Little understood they how its emotions inspire to deeds of daring—how love absorbs all selfishness—even life becoming a secondary consideration, when weighed against the happiness or safety of its object. These rude men had never loved as I. I gave no ear to their too prudent counsels.

Others acknowledged the danger, but saw not how I could act differently. One or two had in their life's course experienced a touch of tender feeling akin to mine. These could appreciate; and counselled me in consonance with my half-formed resolution. I liked their counsel best.

One had not yet spoken—one upon whose advice I placed a higher value than upon the combined wisdom of all the others. I had not yet taken the opinion of the earless trapper.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

RUBE CONSULTING HIS ORACLE.

He was standing apart from the rest—leaning, I should rather say, for his body was not erect, but diagonal. In this attitude it was propped by his rifle, the butt of which was steadied against the stump of a tree, whilst the muzzle appeared to rest upon the bridge of Rube's own nose.

As the man and the piece were about of a length, the two thus placed in juxtaposition presented the exact figure of an inverted V, and the small close-capped skull of the trapper formed a sufficiently tapering apex to the angle. Both his hands were clasped round the barrel, near its muzzle, his fingers interlocking, while the thumbs lay flat—one upon each side of his nose.

At first glance, it was difficult to tell whether he was gazing into the barrel of the piece, or beyond it upon the Indian camp.

The attitude was not new to him nor to me; it was not the first time I had observed him in a posture precisely similar. I knew it was his favourite *pose*, when any question of unusual difficulty required all the energy of his 'instincts.' He was now, as often of yore, consulting his 'divinity,' presumed to dwell far down within the dark tube of 'Targuts.'

After a time, all the others ceased to speak, and stood watching him. They knew that no step would be taken before Rube's advice had been received; and they waited with more or less patience for him to speak.

Full ten minutes passed, and still the old trapper neither stirred nor spoke. Nor lip nor muscle of him was seen to move; the eyes alone could be detected in motion, and these small orbs scintillating in their deep sockets, were the only signs of life which he shewed. Standing rigid and still, he appeared, not a statue, but a scarecrow, propped up by a stick; and the long, brown, weather-washed rifle did not belie the resemblance. Full ten minutes passed, and still he spoke not; his 'oracle' had not yet yielded its response.

I have said that at the first glance it was difficult to tell whether the old man was gazing into the barrel of his gun or beyond it. After watching him closely, I saw that he was doing both. Now his eyes were a little raised, as if he looked upon the plain—anon they were lowered, and evidently peering into the tube. He was drawing the data of his problem from facts—he was trusting to his divinity for the solution.

For a long time he kept up this singular process of conjuration—alternating his glances in equal distribution between the hollow cylinder and the small circle of vision that covered the Indian camp.

The others began to grow impatient; all were interested in the result, and not without reason. Standing upon the limits of a life-danger, it is not strange they should feel anxiety about the issue.

Thus far, however, none had offered to interrupt or question the queer old man. None dared. One or two of the party had already had a taste of his quality when fretted or interfered with, and no one desired to draw upon himself the sharp 'talk' of the earless trapper.

Garey at length approached, but not until Rube, with a triumphant toss of his head and a scarcely audible 'wheep' from his thin lips, shewed signs that the consultation had ended, and that the 'joss' who dwelt at the bottom of his rifle-barrel had vouchsafed an answer!

I had watched him with the rest. I liked that expressive hitch of the head; I liked the low, but momentous sibilation that terminated the *séance* between him and his familiar spirit. They were signs that the knot was unravelled—that the old trapper had devised some feasible plan by which the Indian camp might be entered.

Garey and I drew near, but not to question him; we understood him too well for that. We knew that he must be left free to develop his purpose in his own time; and we left him free—simply placing ourselves by his side.

'Wal, Billee!' he said, after drawing a long breath, 'an yurself, young fellur! whet do 'ee both think o' this hyur bizness: looks ugly, don't it—eh, boyees?'

''Tarnal ugly,' was Garey's laconic answer.

'Thort so meself at fust.'

'Thar ain't no plan o' gettin into thar camp,' said the young trapper, in a desponding tone.

'The doose thur ain't! What greenhorn put thet idee inter yur brain-pan, Bill?'

'Wal, thar are a plan; but 'tain't much o' a one: we've been talkin it over hyar.'

'Le's hear it,' rejoined Rube, with an exulting chuckle—'le's hev it, boyee! an quick, Bill, fur time's dodrotted preecious 'bout now. Wal?'

'It's jest this, Rube, neyther less nor more: the capt'n proposes to take the Injun's hoss, and ride straight into thar camp.'

'Straight custrut in do'ee?'

'Ov coorse; it'ud be no use goin about the bush: they kin see him acomin from ony side.'

'I'll be durned ef they kin—thet I'll be durned. Wagh! they cudn't 'a see me—thet they cudn't, ef ivery niggur o' 'em hed the eyes o' an Argoose—thet they cudn't, Billee.'

'How?' I inquired. 'Do you mean to say that it is possible for any one to approach yonder camp without being observed? Is that what you mean, Rube?'

'Thet ur preezactly whet I mean, young fellur. No—not adzactly thet eyther. One o' *you* I didn't say: whet I sayed wur, that this hyur trapper, Rube Rawlins o' the Rocky Mountains, kud slide inter yander campmint jest like greased lightnin through a gooseberry-bush, 'ithout e'er an Injun seein 'im; an thet, too, ef the red-skinned vamints hed more eyes in thur heads than they hev lice; which, accordin to this child's reck'nin, 'ud guv ivery squaw's son o' the gang as many peepers as thur ur spots in a peecock's tail, an a wheen over to breed, I kalkerlate. No plan to git inter thur camp 'ithout bein seed! Wagh! yur gettin green, Bill Garey!'

'How can it be accomplished, Rube? Pray, explain! You know how impatient'——

'Don't git unpayshint, young fellur! thet ur's no use whetsomdiver. Yu'll need payshinse, an a good grist o' thet ur, afore ye kin warm yur shins at yander fires; but 'ee kin do it, an in the nick o' time too, ef yu'll go preezactly accordin to whet ole Rube tells ye, an keep yur eye well skinned an yur teeth from chatterin: I knows yu'll do all thet. I knows yur weasel to the back o' yur neck, an kin whip yur weight in wild cat any day i' the year. Now? D'yur agree to follur my direckshuns?'

'I promise faithfully to act according to your advice.'

'Thet ur sensible sayed—durnation'd sensible. Wal, then, I'll gi' ye my device.'

As Rube said this, he moved forward to the edge of the timber, making a sign for Garey and myself to follow.

On reaching its outer edge, but still within cover, he dropped down upon his knees, behind some evergreen bushes.

I imitated his example, and knelt upon his right, while Garey crouched down on the left.

Our eyes were directed upon the Indian camp, of which, and the plain around it, we had a good view—as good as could be obtained under the light of a too brilliant moon.

After we had surveyed the scene for some moments in silence, the old trapper condescended to begin the conversation.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

THE TRAPPER'S COUNSEL.

'Now, Bill Garey, an you, young fellur, jest clap yur eyes on thet 'ere campmint, an see ef thur ain't a road leadin inter the very heart o' it, strait as the tail o' a skeeart fox. 'Ee see it? eh?'

'Not under kiver?' replied Garey interrogatively.

'Unner kiver—ivery step o' the way—the best o' kiver.'

Garey and I once more scrutinised the whole circumference of the encampment, and the ground adjacent. We could perceive no cover by which the camp could be approached. Surely there was none.

What could Rube mean? Were there clouds in the sky? Had he perceived some portent of coming darkness? Had his words reference to this?

I raised my eyes, and swept the whole canopy with inquiring glances. Up to the zenith, around the horizon—east, west, north, and south—I looked for clouds, but looked in vain. A few light cirrhi floated high in the atmosphere; but these, even when crossing the moon's disk, cast no perceptible shadow. On the contrary, they were tokens of settled weather; and moving slowly, almost fixed upon the face of the heavens, were evidence that no sudden change might be expected. When the trapper talked of entering the camp under cover, he could not have meant under cover of darkness. What then?

'Don't see ony kiver, old hoss,' rejoined Garey, after a pause; 'neyther bush nor weed.'

'Bush!' echoed Rube—'weed! who's talkin 'bout weeds an bushes? Thur's other ways o' hidin yur karkidge 'sides stickin it in a bush or unner a weed. Yur a gettin durnation'd pumpkin-headed, Bill Garey. I gin to think yur in the same purdicamint as the young fellur hisself. Yu've been a humbuggin wi' one o' them ur Mexikin moochachers.'

'No, Rube, no.'

'Durn me, ef I don't b'lieve you hev, boy. I heern ye tell one o' 'em'——

'What?'

'Wagh! ye know well enuf. Didn't 'ee tell one o' 'em gurls at the rancherie thet ye loved her as hard as a mule kud kick—sartintly ye did; them wur yur preezact words, Billee.'

'I was only jokin, hoss.'

'Putty jokin thet ur 'll be when I gits back to Bent's Fort, an tell yur Coco squaw. He, he, he—ho, ho, hoo! Geehosophat! thur *will* be a rumpus.'

'Nonsense, Rube; thar's nothin ov it.'

'Thur must 'a be: yur brain-pan's out o' order, Bill; ye hain't hed a clur idee for days back. Bushes! an weeds too! Wagh! who sayed thur wur bushes? Whur's yur eyes? d' yur see a *bank?*'

'A bank!' echoed Garey and I simultaneously.

'Ye-es,' drawled Rube—'a bank. I guess thur's a bank, right afore yur noses, ef both o' yur ain't as blind as the kittlins o' a 'possum. Now, do 'ee see it?'

Neither of us made reply to the final interrogatory. For the first time, we began to comprehend Rube's meaning; and our eyes as well as thoughts were suddenly directed upon the object indicated by words—the bank of the stream—for to that referred.

I have stated that the little river ran close to the Indian lines, and on one side formed the boundary the camp. We could tell that the current was towards us; for the stream, on reaching the hill upon which were, turned sharply off, and swept round its base. The Indian camp was on the left bank, though its right when viewed up-stream, as we were regarding it. Any one proceeding up the left bank must therefore necessarily pass within the lines, and through among the horses that were staked nearest to the water.

It need not be supposed that under our scrutiny the stream had hitherto escaped observation. I myself had long ago thought of it as a means covering my approach. Time after time had my eyes dwelt upon it, but without result. In its channel could perceive no shelter from observation. Its banks were low, and without either rush or bush upon them. The green turf of the prairie stretched up to the very brink, and scarcely twelve inches below its level was surface of the current. This was especially the case along the front of the encampment, and for some distance above and below.

Any one endeavouring to enter the camp by stealing up the channel, must have gone completely under water, for even a swimmer could have been observed upon its surface; or even if a man could have approached in this way, there was no hope that a horse could be taken near; and without the horse, what prospect of ultimate escape?

It had seemed to me impossible. More than once had I taken into consideration, and as often rejected the idea.

Not so Rube. It was the very scheme he had conceived, and he now proceeded to point out its practicability.

'Now, theen—ees see a bank, do 'ee?'

''Tain't much o' a bank,' replied Garey, rather discouragingly.

'No; 'tain't as high as Massoora bluffs, nor kenyons o' Snake River—thet nob'dy durnies; but 'tain't as high as it mout be, it ur ivery minnit a gittin higherer, I reck'n.'

'Getting higher, you say?'

'Ye-es; or whet ur putty consid'able the same thing, the t'other ur a gittin lower.'

'The water, you mean?'

'The water ur a fallin—gwine down by inches at a jump; an in a hour from this, thur'll be bluffs afront o' the camp helf a yurd high—thet's whet thur'll be.'

'And you think I could get into the camp creeping under them?'

'Sure o't. Whet's to hinner ye? it ur easy as fallin off a log.'

'But the horse—how could I bring him near?'

'Jest the same way as yurself. I tell yur the bed thet river ur deep enuf to hide the biggest hoss in creeashun. 'Tur now full, for the reezun thur's been a fresh in consykwince o' last night's rain: 'ee needn't mind thet—the hoss kin wade or swim eyther, an the bank 'll kiver 'im from the eyes o' the Injuns. You kin leave 'im in the river.'

'In the water?'

'In coorse—yur hoss'll stan thur; an ef he don't you kin tie his nose to the bank. You kin take as near as you please; but don't go too far to wind'ard, else them mustangs 'll smell 'im, an then it ur all both wi' yurself an yur hoss. About two hundred yurds ull be yur likeliest distence. Ef you git gurl clur, ye kin easy run thet, I reck'n; put straight for the hoss; an whun yur mounted, gallip durnation up hyur for the timmer, whur we'll be cached; an then, durn 'em! ef the red-skins don't git goss out o' our rifles. Wagh! thet's the way to do the thing—*it* ur.'

Certainly, the plan appeared practicable enough. The sinking of the water was a new element; it had escaped my observation, though Rube had noted it. It was this that had delayed him so long in giving his opinion; he had been watching it while leaning upon his rifle, though none of the rest of us had thought of such a thing. He remembered the heavy rain of the night before; he saw that it had caused a freshet in the little river, that its subsidence had begun; and, as in most prairie-streams, it was progressing with rapidity. His keen eye had detected a fall of several inches during the half hour we had been upon the ground. I could myself observe, now that it was pointed out to me, that the banks were *higher* than before.

Certainly, the plan of approaching by the stream had assumed a more feasible aspect. If the channel should prove deep enough, I might get the horse sufficiently near: the rest would have to be left to stratagem and chance.

'Yur ridin in the Injun hoss,' said Rube, 'ud niver do: it mout, on the wust pinch; an ef ee don't git in the t'other way, yur kin still try it; but ye kud niver git acrosst through the cavayard: 'em mustangs 'ud be sure to make sich a snortin an stompin, an whigherin, as 'ud bring the hul campmint about ye; an some o' the sharp-eyed niggurs 'ud be sartint to find out yur hide wur white. T'other way ur fur the safest—it ur.'

I was not long in making up my mind. Rube's counsel at once decided me, and I resolved to act accordingly.

CHAPTER XC.

TAKING TO THE WATER.

I spent but little time in preparations; these had been made already. It remained only to tighten my saddle-girt, look to the caps of my revolvers, and place both pistols and knife in the belt behind my back; there the weapons would be concealed by the pendent robe of jaguar-skins. In a few minutes I was ready.

I still loitered a while, to wait for the falling of the water; not long—I was too anxious to tarry long. The hour of the council might be nigh—I might be too late for the crisis. Not long did I loiter.

It was not necessary. Even by the moonlight, we could distinguish the dark line of the bank separating the grassy turf from the surface of the water. The rippling current was shining like silver-lace, and, by contrast, the dark earthy strip that rose vertically above it, could be observed more distinctly. It was sensibly broader.

I could wait no longer. I leaped into the saddle. My comrades crowded around me to say a parting word; with a wish or a prayer upon their lips, one after another pressed my hand. Some doubted of their ever seeing me again—I could tell this from the tone of their leave-taking; others were more confident. All vowed to revenge me if I fell.

Rube and Garey went with me down the hill. At the point where the stream impinged upon it, there were bushes; these continued up the declivity, and joined the timber upon the summit. Under their cover we had descended, reaching the bank just at the salient angle of the bend. A thin skirting of similar bushes ran around the base of the hill, and following the path by which we had come, the ambuscade might have been moved a little nearer to the camp. But the cover was not so good as the grove upon the summit, and in case of a retreat, it would be necessary to gallop up the naked face of the slope, and thus expose our numbers. It was decided, therefore, to leave the men where they were.

From the bend to the Indian camp, the river trended almost in a straight line, and its long reach lay before my eyes like a band of shining metal. Along its banks, the bush extended no further. A single step towards the camp would have exposed me to the view of its occupants.

At this point, therefore, it was necessary for me to take to the water; and dismounting, I made ready for the immersion.

The trappers had spoken their last words of instruction and counsel; they had both grasped my hand, giving it a significant squeeze that promised more than words; but to these, too, had they given utterance.

'Don't be afeerd, capt'n!' said the younger. 'Rube and I won't be far off. If we hear your pistols, we'll make a rush to'rst you, and meet you half-way anyhow; and if onything should happen amiss'—here Garey spoke with emphasis—'you may depend on't we'll take a bloody revenge.'

'Yees!' echoed Rube, 'we'll do jest thet. Thur'll be many a nick in Targuts afore next Krissmuss ef *you* ur rubbed out, young fellur; thet I swar to ye. But don't be skeeart! Keep yur eye sharp-skinned, an yur claws steady, an thur's no fear but yu'll git clur. Oncest yur clur o' the camp, 'ee may reck'n on us. Put straight for the timmer, an gallip as ef Ole Scratch wur agruppin at the tail o' yur critter.'

I waited to hear no more, but leading Moro down the bank, at a place where it sloped, I stepped gently into the current. My well-trained steed followed without hesitation, and in another instant we were both breast-deep in the flood. The water was just the depth I desired. There was a half yard of bank that rose vertically above the surface; and this was sufficient to shelter either my own head, as I stood erect, or the frontlet of my horse. Should the channel continue of uniform depth as far as the camp, the approach would be easy indeed; and, for certain hydrographic reasons, I was under the belief it would.

The plumes of the Indian bonnet rose above the level of the meadow-turf, and as the feathers—dyed of gay colours—would have formed a conspicuous object, I took off the gaudy head-dress, and carried it in my hand.

I also raised the robe of jaguar-skin over my shoulders, in order to keep it dry; and for the same reason, temporarily carried my pistols above the water-line.

The making of these slight alterations occupied only a minute or so; and as soon as they were completed, I moved forward through the water.

The very depth of the stream proved a circumstance in my favour. In wading, both horse and man make less noise in deep than in shallow water; and this was an important consideration. The night was still—too still for my wishes—and the plunging sound would have been heard afar off; but fortunately there were rapids below—just where the stream forced its way through the spur of the hill—and the hissing sough of these, louder in the still night, was borne upon the air to the distance of many miles. Their noise, to my own ears, almost drowned the plashing made by Moro and myself. I had noted this *point d'avantage* before embarking upon the enterprise.

At the distance of two hundred yards from the bushes, I paused to look back. My purpose was to fix in my memory the direction of the hill, and more especially the point where my comrades had been left in ambush: in the event of a close pursuit, it would not do to mistake their exact situation.

I easily made out the place, and saw that, for several reasons, a better could not have been chosen. The trees that timbered the crest of the hill were of a peculiar kind—none more so upon the earth. They were a species of arborescent yucca, then unknown to botanists. Many of them were forty feet in height; and their thick angular branches, and terminal fascicles of rigid leaves, outlined against the sky, formed a singular, almost an unearthly spectacle. It was unlike any other vegetation upon earth, more resembling a grove of cast iron than a wood of exogenous trees.

Why I regarded the spot as favourable for an ambush, was chiefly this: a party approaching it from the plain, and climbing the hill, might fancy a host of enemies in their front; for the trees themselves, with their heads of radiating blades, bore a striking resemblance to an array of plumed gigantic warriors. Many of the yuccas were only six feet in height, with tufted heads, and branchless trunks as gross as the body of a man, and they might readily have been mistaken for human beings.

I saw at a glance the advantage of the position. Should the Indians pursue me, and I should succeed in reaching the timber before them, a volley from my comrades would check the pursuers, however numerous. The nine rifles would be enough, with a few shots from the revolvers. The savages would fancy nine hundred under the mystifying shadows of that spectral-like grove.

With confidence, strengthened by these considerations, I once more turned my face up-stream; and 'breasting the current, kept on.

CHAPTER XCI.

UP-STREAM.

My advance was far from being rapid. The water was occasionally deeper or shallower, but generally rising above my hips—deep enough to render wading a task of time and difficulty. The current was of course against me; and though not very swift, seriously impeded my progress. I could have advanced more rapidly, but for the necessity of keeping my head and that of my horse below the escarpment of the bank. At times it was a close fit, with scarcely an inch to spare; and in several places I was compelled to move with my neck bent, and my horse's nose held down to the surface of the water.

At intervals, I paused to rest myself—for the exertion of wading against the current wearied me, and took away my breath. This was particularly the case when I was required to crouch; but I chose my resting-places where the channel was deepest, and where I could stand erect.

I was all the while anxious to look up and take a survey of the camp: I wished to ascertain its distance and position; but I dared not raise my head above the level of the bank. The sward that crowned it was smooth as a mown meadow, and the edge-line of the turf even and unbroken. Had I shewn but my hand above it, it might have been seen in that clear white light. I dared not shew either hand or head.

I had advanced I knew not how far, but I fancied I must be near the lines. All the way, I had kept close under the left bank, which, as Rube had predicted, now rose a full half yard above the water-line. This was a favourable circumstance, and another equally so was the fact that the moon on that—the eastern side—was yet low in the sky, and consequently the bank flung a broad black shadow that extended nearly half-way across the stream. In this shadow I walked, and its friendly darkness sheltered both myself and my horse.

I fancied I must be near the lines, and longed to reconnoitre them, but, for the reasons already given, dared not.

I was equally afraid to make any further advance—for that might be still more perilous. I had already noted the direction of the wind: it blew *from* the river, and *towards* the camp; and should I bring my horse opposite the line of the mustangs, I would then be directly to windward of them, and in danger from their keen nostrils. They would be almost certain to take up the scent of my steed, and utter their warning snorts. The breeze was light, but so much the worse. There was sufficient to carry the smell, and not enough to drown the plunging noise necessarily made by my horse moving through the water, with the hollow pounding of his hoofs upon the rocks at the bottom.

If I raised my head over the bank, there was the danger of being observed; if I advanced, the prospect was one of still greater peril.

For some moments I stood hesitating—uncertain as to whether I should leave my horse, or lead him a little further. I heard noises from the camp, but they were not distinct enough to guide me.

I looked back down the river, with the hope of being able to calculate the distance I had come, and by that means decide where I was; but my observation furnished no data by which I could determine my position. With my eyes almost on a level with the surface of the water, I could not judge satisfactorily of distance.

I turned my face up-stream again, and scrutinised the parapet line of the bank. Just then I saw an object over its edge that answered well to guide me: it was the croup and hip-bones of a horse—one of the mustangs staked near the bank. I saw neither the head nor shoulders of the animal; its hind quarters were towards the stream; its head was to the grass—it was browsing.

The sight gratified me. The mustang was full two hundred yards above the point I had reached. I knew that its position marked the outer line of the encampment. I was just in the place where I wanted to be—about two hundred yards from the lines. Just at that distance I desired to leave my horse. I had taken the precaution to bring with me my picket-pin—one of the essentials of the prairie traveller. It was the work of a moment to delve it into the bank. I needed not to drive it with violence: my well-trained steed never broke fastening, however slight. With him the stake was only required as a sign that he was not free to wander.

In a moment, then, he was staked; and with a 'whisper' I parted from him, and kept on up-stream.

I had not gone a dozen yards further, when I perceived a break in the line of the bank. It was a little *gully* that led slantingly from the level of the prairie down to the bed of the stream. Its counterpart I perceived on the opposite side. The two indicated a ford or crossing used by buffaloes, wild-horses, and other denizens of the prairie.

At first, I viewed it with apprehension; I feared it might uncover my body to the eyes of the enemy; but on coming opposite, my fears were allayed: the slope was abrupt, and the high ground screened me as before. There would be no danger in passing the place.

As I was about moving on, an idea arrested me; and I paused to regard the gully with a look of greater interest. It offered me an advantage.

I had been troubled about the position in which I had left my horse. Should I succeed in getting back, of course it would be under the pressure of a hot pursuit, and my steed was not conveniently placed; his back was below the level of the bank. He might easily be mounted, but how should I get out of the bed of the stream. Only by a desperate leap might he reach the plain above; and he might fail in the effort; —time might be lost, when time and speed would be most wanted.

I had been troubled with this thought; it need trouble me no longer. The 'crossing' afforded easy access either to or from the channel of the river—the very thing I wanted.

I was not slow to profit by the discovery. I turned back, and having released the rein, led my horse gently up to the break.

Choosing a spot under the highest part of the bank, I fastened him as before, and there left him.

I now moved with more ease and confidence, but with increased caution. I was getting too near to risk making the slightest noise in the water; a single plash might betray me.

It was my intention to keep in the channel, until I had passed the point where the horses were staked; by so doing, I should avoid crossing the line of the horse-guards, and, what was quite as important, that of the horses themselves, for I was equally apprehensive of being discovered by the latter. Once inside their circle, they would take no notice of me, for doubtless there would be other Indians within sight; and I trusted to my well-counterfeited semblance of savagery to deceive the eyes of the equine sentinels.

I did not wish to go far beyond their line; that would bring me in front of the camp itself—too near its fires and its idle groups.

I had noticed before starting that there was a broad belt between the place occupied by the men, and that where their horses were staked. This 'neutral' ground was little used by the camp loungers, and somewhere on the edge of it I was desirous of making my *entrée*.

I succeeded to my utmost wishes. Closely hugging the bank, I passed the browsing mustangs; under their very noses I glided past, for I could hear them munching the herbage right over me; but so silently did I steal along, that neither snort nor hoof-stroke heralded my advance.

In a few minutes, I was sufficiently beyond them to make halt.

I raised my head; slowly and gently I raised it, till my eyes were above the level of the prairie slope. No one was near. I could see the swarth savages grouped around their fires; but they were a hundred yards off, or more. They were capering, and talking, and laughing; but no ear was bent, and no eye seemed turned towards me. No one was near.

I grasped the bank with my hands, and drew myself up. Slowly and silently I ascended, like some demon from the dark trap-door of a stage. On my knees, I reached the level of the turf; and, then gently rising to my feet, I stood erect within the limits of the Indian camp—to all appearance as complete a savage as any upon the ground!

THE GLORIOUS UNCERTAINTY OF THE LAW.

It has now for some years been a very well-accredited fact, that there are many big as well as little matters in our otherwise excellent system of jurisprudence which require improvement; and although lawyers, as a class, are perhaps not generally favourable to alteration, some defects in legal proceedings are so glaring, and their evil influence on the community at large so considerable, that those in as well as those out of the profession of the law alike agree in the desirableness of a change.

Attention has of late been very much directed towards the subject of appeals; and although no alteration of any great importance has yet been made in the mode of conducting them in the superior courts, the evils to be remedied are so formidable, that we doubt whether any subject can better illustrate to the general reader the delay and expense which *may* be attendant upon the administration of the law, than the subject of 'appeals.' That the opinion of a single judge, however eminent and learned he may be, should be final and conclusive, is what no sensible person will for a moment urge: all men are liable to error; and whatever be the wisdom of the expounder of the law, he may easily see things in a wrong light, and be led to draw conclusions, his judgment upon which, if final, would not only bring odium upon the law which he professes to understand, but entail injustice and oppression upon those who had the misfortune to be the unsuccessful parties.

In our own, and in almost every other civilised country, we find that this opinion has prevailed, and that a right of appealing from the decision of one court to that of another, exceeding the former in the number or presumed greater wisdom of its presiding officers, has been recognised. But in England this system of appeal has become so complicated, as to be unintelligible to the non-legal inquirer, who often wanders through the newspaper summary of some long legal proceeding in which he feels an interest, and after learning that 'the judge on the original trial directed a verdict for the plaintiff'—that the 'court above' granted a 'rule nisi' for a new trial, such rule being subsequently 'discharged,' but a '*venire de novo*' awarded on a 'writ of error,' which was contested in the House of Lords, and 'the decision of the Court in Banc affirmed the proceedings in error being quashed,' casts away the puzzling report in disgust, still without an answer to the only question he cares to ask respecting the matter—'Which side won?'

It may not, therefore, be altogether uninteresting to attempt a short sketch of the complex apparatus at present used in our courts for conducting legal inquiries.

Taking the *common law* first, we find in Westminster Hall three courts—the Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer. Each of these courts has five judges—fifteen in all—who, during the year, try, on the average, in town and country, about 2500 civil causes, every one of such causes being tried by a judge of either of these three courts sitting alone, with the assistance of a jury.

When a verdict is given, whether for plaintiff or defendant, the unsuccessful party may, if he pleases, apply to the judges of the court in which the action commences—who sit four of them together, *in Banc*, as it is termed, every day during term to receive such applications—asking them to set the verdict aside. He may assert various grounds for the request: That the judge misdirected the jury; that the jury gave a perverse verdict, or one not warranted by the evidence; that new matters have come to light since the trial, which materially alter the appearance of the case; &c. If the judges think that there is something in the application, and choose to hear what can be said on the other side, they grant what is called a rule *nisi*, or, in plain English, consent to the application *unless* the other side appears before them, and proves its impropriety. When the other side has been heard, the judges, having the whole matter before them, give their solemn opinion as to whether the proceedings in the cause are valid and proper, or the reverse.

Having done so, it might be imagined that the affair was at an end, for it seems altogether unlikely that the solemn decisions of *four* learned judges should be incorrect; but in reality, an appeal lies in almost every instance from the judgment of the four judges in Banc, to what is termed the 'Court of Error.' The composition of this court is somewhat ingenious. We have already said that there are three superior courts of common law, in either of which an ordinary action may be brought. The Court of Error is composed of the judges of the two courts in which the action is *not* brought; so that in this way, the judges of the Court of Common Pleas and Exchequer, sitting together, hear errors from the Queen's Bench; the

Courts of Queen's Bench and Exchequer hear those from the Common Pleas; and the Common Pleas and Queen's Bench dispose of those from the Exchequer; and as *all* the judges of either court sit in a Court of Error, ten judges confirm or overrule the judgment of four.

Of course, it requires rather a well-filled pocket to set the Error Court in motion, and the majority of suitors are obliged to be contented with the judgment obtained in Banc. Out of about 500 cases heard annually before the judges in Banc, not more than from twenty-five to thirty find their way into the Court of Error.

But even the Court of Error, with its imposing array of ten sages of the law, is not the *last* resource. The law, wisely considering that the judges of the land are, after all, but *commoners*, and their learning and judgment only those of commoners, has given a right of appeal from their decision as pronounced in a Court of Error, to the House of Lords, presuming—to quote an ancient authority—that 'those whom the king hath by prerogative and in the discretion of his princely wisdom ennobled, be ennobled in mind and understanding as well as in earthly estate, and be better able to determine dark and weighty matters than are commoners.' The House of Lords, then, is the ultimate tribunal; and it is there, and there alone, that the suitor, blest with sufficient money and patience to save him from his breaking down on the road, may be presumed to get pure, unimpeachable law—the 'perfection of reason,' as Blackstone designates it. Happy suitor! we sincerely hope that when he obtains he may enjoy it.

Whether the members of the House of Lords ever sat in any great number and heard appeals from courts of law, without calling in the assistance and receiving the advice of the judges of such courts, we do not know, and the matter is somewhat doubtful; but of late years, it seems to have been discovered, that 'the ennobling of the mind and understanding,' contingent upon an elevation to the peerage, does not at all events give an intuitive perception into profound and difficult legal questions, and that the only 'coronet wearers' who are competent to determine such, are, 1*st*, The lord chancellor, who is 'ex-officio' Speaker of the House; and 2*d*, Certain members of the legal profession who, having once held high judicial offices in courts of law or equity, have retired from their judicial posts, and are now members of the 'Upper House.'

The number of 'law-lords,' as they are technically called, is thus necessarily very limited; and as, from age and infirmity, some cannot attend upon any, and none upon *all* the appeal cases, the actual number of peers before whom any case is heard is small indeed, being, beside the chancellor, not more than three, and oftener two. On this and other accounts, the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords is considered by all parties very much in need of improvement, and not more than ten or twelve appeals from the Court of Error—seldom, indeed, so many—annually find their way into it.

If, indeed, the House, as a court of appeal from the common law-courts, was attended *only* by the few individuals we have mentioned, it is probable there would be a good deal more grumbling as to the inefficiency of the court than there is; but from time immemorial, it has been customary to summon all the fifteen judges of England to hear such appeals. These learned individuals, however, judges though they be in other places, are no judges here. In the writs summoning them to every new parliament, they are only called upon to 'treat and advise,' whilst the peers themselves are to 'hear and determine' matters coming before them. The judges are, therefore, quite second-rate individuals in the House of Lords; they cannot, by the rules of the House, ask a question of the counsel conducting the case; cannot make a single observation or correct any error during the progress of the argument; and when the long-winded speeches are all over, they must patiently wait the pleasure of the House before they offer their *opinions*, by which the judgment of the lords is not in the slightest degree bound, and two or three of those great individuals may, and more than once have, set at naught the solemn opinions of nearly all the judges, although those opinions have been supported by the grave authority of the lord chancellor himself!

Such, then, are the several tribunals before which an action at common law may be successively brought. 'Well,' exclaims the reader, 'after all, it is an excellent arrangement for securing justice *at last*.' True, good friend, but what a long way off the at last is; and what a deal of money it takes to reach it! A millionaire, indeed, may be badly treated at Nisi Prius; may be set on his legs by the Court in Banc; be knocked over by his opponent in Error; and finally, at a cost altogether of several thousands, have *his rights* awarded him in the House of Lords. But the poor widow, whose bit of freehold has been encroached upon by a rich neighbour, after seeing the verdict she has obtained by the outlay of her last penny set aside by the judges in Banc, must be content to lose both money and land, simply because she has no funds to put the expensive machinery of the Court of Error in motion.

Let us follow a man with a little money into the courts. Here is our friend, Mr John Smith of Norfolk, a decent respectable yeoman, with a farm of some 200 acres, and a snug little matter of L.1000 in the funds. He is not married, but is courting the pretty rosy-cheeked Elizabeth Baker, the belle of the village, and leads altogether a most jolly sunshiny life. But alas! John Smith goes to law! Old Wickens, his neighbour, a grasping curmudgeon, who farms the adjoining land, has for years past asserted his right to about half an acre of marshy soil, on the extreme border of John's farm, called Squash Corner, of no use to anybody, and as to the ownership of which there have been disputes before Old Wickens himself was born. John, of course, won't give up, and so to law they go—a thin, parchment-faced, one-eyed old stick of an attorney 'looking up' Wickens's case; and a bland, unctuous, take care of Number One, professional man, Mr Codecil, managing John's little affair. The dry legal matters preliminary to the trial would be perfectly uninteresting to the reader, and we therefore omit them. The cause comes on for trial at the next Norwich Assizes. Before it is half over, a very knotty point arises, to the extreme delight of counsel and attorneys on either side. The judge reflects; looks into some half-dozen books; confers with his brother-judge, who is trying criminals in the adjoining court; and eventually says (oh! ominous words), 'that he shall *reserve* the point.' The trial proceeds, and John gains the day. Wickens's parchment-faced friend is in ecstasies: the point reserved is in his favour, and the idea of moving in the court above, quite obliterates any unpleasantness arising from an adverse verdict. 'Ah!' says Codecil, as he pockets a little matter of L.200 received from John, 'those fellows will give us some more trouble yet, depend upon it.'

Next term, Wickens's counsel moves in the court above for a rule *nisi* to reverse the verdict, or for a new trial, and, with some difficulty perhaps, obtains it. John, of course, must defend the verdict he has gained at such a heavy cost, and by the advice of Codecil, instructs counsel to argue to 'discharge' the rule. Half a year after, the court is prepared to hear the case. John buys a new suit of clothes, and comes up specially to Westminster Hall, but is astonished at the curious way in which the matter is gone through. The good old days when one counsel made a long clear speech, and set out all the facts; when another 'followed on the same side;' when each of their numerous 'points'—for counsel were then, as now, in that respect a sort of legal porcupine—was severally answered; and the judges, calm and dignified during the argument, afterwards gave their judgment—have long passed away, and now a sort of verbal short-hand is the order of the day.

First, the judge who tried the cause, and who is a member of the same court in which the action is brought, reads his notes of the original trial; then John's leading counsel, Mr Nollepros, holds a sort of rapid and entangled conversation with the four judges at once, and sits down after a very few minutes, quite aware that 'the court is with him.' Wickens's counsel, Mr Yearbook, then takes up the matter, and something like the following conversation is kept up between the learned judges—whom we respectively designate Justices A, B, C, and D—and the counsel:

Yearbook. My lords, I appear to support the rule in this case: it is, as your lordships have heard, one of trespass, tried last Norwich Assizes, before Mr Justice D.

Justice B. Have you another copy of the pleadings to hand up?

(Handed up.)

Year. My lords, in this case——

Justice C. Is there no plan of the farm?

Year. Here is one, my lords.

(All the four judges look at it and talk about it at once, and eventually Justice B gets it to himself.)

Justice A. Go on, Mr Yearbook.

Year. My lords, I was saying——

Just. B. It's a strange thing; I've sat on the bench a great number of years, and I never knew a plan to be made the right size!

Year. No, my lord. My lords, in this case——

Just. B. Which is the north of the plan?

Year. At bottom, my lord. My lords——

Just. B. I thought so; it's always the way. Why can't the architect who constructs the plan put the north *to* the north, and the south *to* the south?

Year. Yes, my lord. My lords——

Just. B. I wouldn't allow them their expenses, if they can't do work in a proper manner.

Year. No, my lord. My lords, I was saying——

Just. D. The second plea to this declaration, Mr Yearbook, won't hold water.

Just. B. O no; you certainly can't rely on the second plea.

Year. My lords, if your lordships will permit me——

Just. D. I own I can't see the relevancy of the first plea.

Just. B. The pleadings are very inartificial.

Year. I am coming to the second plea, my lord.

Just. A. It may reasonably be presumed from the ordinary nature of pleading, and from the various circumstances.

Just. C. There is no joinder in demurrer, or else a question might arise on the third plea.

Just. B. Clearly not.

Just. C. O yes.

Just. D. Well, I don't think, Mr Yearbook, that you will succeed—that's my impression.

Year. If your lordships think——

Just. B. No, not exactly so; but you see the second plea——

Year. My lord, that's what I am coming to——

Just. C. What we really want to know is——

Just. B. Usher! first Meesom and Welsley, twelfth Barnwall and Alderson, Comyn's digest; title, 'Estopel.'

Year. Perhaps your lordships are not aware that it has been decided in——

Just. B. O yes, in Sharpe's case; but that is very shaky law; in my own time, in Edger and Dodger, which you will find in third Manning and Grainger——

Just. A. I was counsel in that case; it occupied five days and a half.

Just. D. I only reserved the point to hear if you could make anything of it, Mr Yearbook.

Just. C. O yes; and we only granted the rule *nisi* because you pressed it so much.

Just. B. Well, I don't know; I think the ruling was perfectly right.

Just. C. Rule discharged.

Just. D. I think so decidedly.

Just. B. Come, call on the next case.

Year. Then, my lords——

Just. B. O dear, no; it's idle, Mr Yearbook, to——

Just. C. O dear, yes. Rule discharged.

'Bravo!' says Mr Codecil, as he leaves the court; 'we've conquered them now, in good earnest.'

But Codecil, deep fellow! knows as well as possible the nature of his parchment-faced friend, and in this, as in other cases, acts upon the spirit of the ancient distich:

> Here are two fat wethers fallen out with one another,
> If you'll fleece one, I'll fleece the other!

and therefore it is with no surprise, and with considerable delight, that some few days after he receives a little notice, which he at once communicates to his client, that a 'memorandum has been left with a master of the court, stating that there is *error* in law, in the record and proceedings in Smith *v.* Wickens!'

'Very good, ve-ry good!' says Mr Codecil; 'if he chooses to go into Error, of course we have nothing to do but to follow him.'

'Will these things *ever* end?' says poor John Smith, as he slowly draws another check for a considerable amount, and hands it to Codecil.

'My dear fellow,' says that excellent professional adviser, 'it will all turn out right *in the end*, trust me for it.'

John goes back to Norfolk, and in about a year's time his case comes on in Error. He does not make his appearance in court this time, for he very justly considers, that if he could not understand five words of the argument before four judges, he is not very likely to understand much of it when conducted before ten. Mr Yearbook, who opens the case in Error, has a great deal to say, a great many books to refer to, and is not nearly so much snubbed as in the court below. He and another counsel on the same side occupy an entire day in their arguments, and Mr Nollepros and his junior are even longer. Yearbook replies; the judges take time to consider the question; and a month afterwards they give judgment *for the appellant Wickens!*

What is John Smith to do? 'Go to the House of Lords, decidedly,' says Codecil; 'I know it must come right in the end.' He has a right to go there—to make Wickens go there. A painstaking judge, sitting at Nisi Prius, has said that he is right; twelve impartial jurymen have said that he is right; four judges sitting together have said that he is right; and now he is told, that he has been wrong all along! 'Go to the House of Lords, de-ci-ded-ly,' says Mr Codecil.

Alas! what is to take him there?—L.900 of his L.1000 have disappeared in law-expenses; the horrible amount of costs accruing on the proceedings in Error, and yet unpaid, will swallow up a good L.500 or L.600 more, to raise which, part of the farm must be sold; and John sees, that if he goes up to the House of Lords, and is unsuccessful there, he shall scarcely have a penny left him in the world. He therefore does, what Codecil declares is 'a thousand pities,' gives up to Wickens Squash Corner, sells enough of his farm to enable him to pay all his law-expenses, abandons for the present all hopes of marrying Elizabeth Baker, and sets heartily to work on his remaining bit of property, a far poorer, but far wiser man.

Such is a short sketch of the present method of conducting common-law appeals. Were we not afraid of swelling our article beyond all reasonable bounds, we might shew the operation of the equity and of the spiritual courts in these matters—how, in the equity courts, cases may be heard and re-heard, and little *legal* points arising during their progress, be sent out to be tried as issues in a court of common law, at an enormous expenditure of time and money, until all the property in dispute, and a good deal besides, has been frittered away in costs, and long years of anxiety and vexation have passed over the heads of the devoted suitors, who at length, as a last resource, appeal to the House of Lords, and find as their *sole* judge there the very officer from whose decision they are appealing!

Turning to Doctors' Commons, we might shew also, how, in the Prerogative Court, a decision may be obtained, which shall be soon after set aside by a judgment of the Court of Arches, which will shortly, in its turn, be overruled by a judgment of the judicial committee of Privy Council, and then—some little common-law points arising—the case itself—as occurred not many years ago—be carried, after the long journey it has already made, through every one of the three courts of common law!

Only one branch of our jurisprudence is not subject to this lengthy and costly system of appealing, and it is the *criminal* law.

The case of a prisoner who has been tried and acquitted, can of course never afterwards be inquired into; while that of a person convicted can only again become the subject of judicial investigation should some *legal* point arise which the judge voluntarily reserves for the opinion of the Court of Criminal Appeal. When this is the case, the point is argued at Westminster, as soon as possible after the original trial, before five judges sitting together. If they are uniform in opinion, one way or the other, the matter ends; if they differ, no matter what the majority, the case is re-argued before all the fifteen judges, also sitting together, and their decision, or that of the majority of them, is final and irrevocable. The judges, however, usually dislike to impose upon a prisoner the anxiety which reserving his case must necessarily occasion, and, unless they have grave doubts on the matter, lay down the law themselves upon the trial. Not more than 40 or 50, out of about 8000 or 10,000 prisoners tried annually in England and Wales, have their cases reserved.

Such, reader, is the way 'appeals' are conducted; and after a pretty fair experience of the 'glorious uncertainty of the law,' the best advice we can give you is—never go into court if you can possibly keep out of it!

CONCOMITANCE OF HIGH CIVILISATION AND BAD TEETH.

It is remarkable that this prevalence of disease of the teeth occurs to such an extent only on the race of mankind to which we belong. In the other branches of the human family, the disposition of the teeth to decay does not exist, or, where present, does not prevail to such an extent. It would appear, indeed, as if a faulty structure of the teeth were an attribute of superior civilisation, and that the more savage man becomes, the more perfect and impervious to decay are his teeth. In the negro and similar races, caries of the teeth seldom occurs. There is little doubt that many of the habits and customs which attend the advance of society in luxury and refinement are injurious to the teeth. Still, these can be looked upon only as very uninfluential causes, and are quite insufficient to account for the evident predisposition of the teeth to decay, by which the civilised races are characterised. It would form much too abstruse a subject for these pages to inquire into the probable dependence which exists between the greater cerebral development which is the undeniable result of civilisation, and the deficiency in the bony structure of the teeth—which dependence we have little doubt will yet be recognised as forming the principal cause of the defective teeth of the more civilised races of mankind.—*Nisbet's Digestion and the Teeth.*

'WILL SAIL TO-MORROW.'

The good ship lies in the crowded dock
Fair as a statue, firm as a rock,
Her tall masts piercing the still blue air,
Her upright funnel all white and bare—
Whence the long soft line of vapoury smoke
'Twixt sky and sea like a vision broke,
Or slowly o'er the horizon curled,
Like a lost hope gone to the other world:
She sails to-morrow—
Sails to-morrow.

Out steps the captain, busy and grave,
With his steady footfall—quick and brave,
His hundred thoughts and his thousand cares,
And his quiet eye that all things dares:
Though a little smile o'er the kind face dawns
On the loving brute that leaps and fawns,
And a little shadow comes and goes
As if heart or memory fled—where, who knows!
He sails to-morrow—
Sails to-morrow.

To-morrow the throngèd line of ships
Will quick close after her as she slips
Into the unknown Deep once more;
To-morrow, to-morrow, some on shore
With straining eyes shall desperate yearn—
'This is not parting? Return—return!'
Peace, wild-wrung hands! Hush, quivering breath,
Love keepeth his own through life and death,
Though she sails to-morrow—
Sails to-morrow!

Sail, stately ship; down Southampton-Water
Gliding fair as old Nereus' daughter,
Christian ship that for freightage bears
Christians, followed by Christian prayers.
God! send angels after her track!
Pitiful God, bring the good ship back!—
All the souls in her for ever keep
Thine—living or dying, awake or asleep.
Then, sail to-morrow:
Ship, sail to-morrow!

May 6.

BAVARIAN PRISON-REFORM.

When M. Obermaier first arrived at Munich, he found from 600 to 700 prisoners in the jail, in the worst state of insubordination, and whose excesses, he was told, defied the harshest and most stringent discipline; the prisoners were all chained together, and attached to each chain was an iron weight, which the strongest found difficulty in dragging along; the guard consisted of about 100 soldiers, who did duty not only at the gates and around the walls, but also in the passages, and even in the workshops and dormitories; and, strangest of all protections against the possibility of an outbreak or individual evasion, twenty to thirty large savage dogs of the blood-hound breed were let loose at night in the passages and courts, to keep their watch and ward. M. Obermaier's system of kindness and labour has now so completely changed this pandemonium, that the prison-gates stand wide open, without a sentinel at the door, and a guard of only twenty men idling away their time in a guard-room off the entrance-hall.—*Murray's Not so Bad as they Seem.*

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TANCRED HALL:

A NARRATIVE.

CERTAINLY, as Slawkenbergius observed to the Rosicrucians, the eccentricities of mankind can never be fully expressed by the formula $(a + 1)^n$. For instance, the introduction of a single minus—of an individual who, to use an expressive Yorkshire idiom, is *not all there*, will lead your calculation to most unforeseen results. One of these results, which last summer fell within the scope of our own observation, we propose now to describe, and that in a style as simple and severe as befits the contemporaries of Macaulay and the Rev. George Gilfillan.

On the skirts, then, of the North Riding Hills—those hills which break at last into the crested cliffs of Knaresborough—stands an old Tudor mansion, lonely, demonstrative, not to be passed without inquiry by traveller or tramp. What is it doing there, shorn of its rookery and elms, and mulcted of nearly all its ancient park? You can see all up the terraced gardens from the road below. The ha-ha is abolished, and privacy extinct. Still, somebody must live there, for the hereditary housemaid is even now drawing up the blinds. Come up into the old church-yard, which takes the hall in flank; there is a private door there, leading to the kitchen-garden, and on it is inscribed, '*Tancred Hospital:* no admittance except on business.' How is this? *This* an hospital, and in the wilds of Yorkshire too! Come directly to the parsonage, and ask our friend the warden: he is an amiable fellow, if ever there was one, and he will tell us. Yes, he will go with us at once; and we enter by the private door; for what is business, madam, but pleasure in harness? We pass round to the terrace-gardens in front. No flowers there now, certainly. The steps, too, are green and 'slape,' and the stone knobs on the balustrade have caps of antique moss; but there is soft grass all over of a century's growth, and plenty of illegitimate footpaths meandering across it. The steps lead up to the fore-court—now a green lawn between the projecting wings of the house; and beyond the fore-court is the great hall-door. The warden tries his key, and we enter. A hall of the period, truly! shooting up at once to the very top of the house; garnished with stately pilasters, and comforted with huge roaring chimneys; but now cold and silent, and ceiled across at half its height, like Ben Nevis in a mist. Still, there are the pictures: Sir Richard Tancred, master of the hounds to William III.; and Charles Tancred, Esq., our hero; and Queen Anne, and Mary Queen of Scots. Here, too, are arms, and luxurious trifles of the Caroline age; and here is the old chair where good Queen Mary sat. The coffin used to hang from that large hook in the ceiling, till they put it in—— But suddenly the hall-door opens, and enter a gentlemanly man in a moustache and a Glengarry bonnet, carrying under his arm—*proh pudor!*—a bundle of cabbages! Certainly, there was something of bathos in the sight of that agreeable esculent—redeemed, however, by the pathos of a second figure that strode in behind the first—an aged tremulous hero, consisting chiefly of a stiff blue cloak and a wide-awake, with a hooked nose by way of copula. The two bowed deferentially to our warden, and vanished into dusky distance. 'Yes, these are two of them,' says the vicar: 'O'Jibaway was a wild fellow once—spent his fortune in keeping the Aniseed hounds; the other is old Trotter of the Blankth—lost an arm tiger-hunting in India before he got his company, poor fellow.' And so we stroll into the great drawing-room, looking out on the bowling-green that was. It is furnished like a club-room, in spite of its wainscot, embossed ceiling, and statuesque mantel-piece; and the round tables with magazines and papers look pretty much as the distinguished moderns in tie-wigs look in Westminster Abbey. Comfortable, however, for the old fellows, when they turn out of their 'studies' in a morning; which they don't always do, though, for some of them haven't the best constitutions. None of them are there now, at anyrate; so we open an inner door, and enter the chapel, which I suspect—and indeed our friend but faintly denies it—was formerly the back drawing-room. However, it has episcopal sanction now; and there's a quaint Georgian pulpit in it, and a singular appearance of altar-rails without an altar, at one end; and here they all meet for service every day. So I think, in this particular at least, we may subtract the minus from old Tancred's character. 'By the way,' says the warden, 'the coffin used to be here at one time; but you haven't seen the dining-room, and they 'll be going to dinner at two.'

We don't see them at dinner—that would be an insult, for they are gentlemen still, you know, and are here as such—but we see the room, and John Thomas is setting out the table in a cleanly but somewhat parochial fashion. A strange old room, lining one side of the hall, as the drawing-room the other, and looking out on the fore-court. One wall is smothered to the cornice with the brethren's kists, each bearing his name without, and his mug and spoon within. Just opposite, over the broad fireplace, is an old map of the estate, and near it hangs a print of the hall and park as they appeared in those days, when the hedges were duly clipped and the pleasaunce stocked with flowers, and when the avenue extended far beyond the present usurping road. Sir Richard Tancred is there too with his fox-hounds, on a heroic scale; but John Thomas is a nuisance, so we adjourn to the grand staircase; and here I confess to a disappointment. Certainly, the place is dingy and dark, and near the bottom is an ominous coal-cellar, which looks very like an *oubliette.* Modern housemaids, however, have not the energy of their ancestors, as the mullioned window testifies; and the strong carved balustrade, too, has been painted yellow by some extravagant warden, with a fine eye for colour. After all, though, this is perhaps the most interesting part of the house; for on the landing above is a goodly row of family portraits—Nevills, and Dacres, and Wyvills of the civil wars; and the bare white walls, as you go up, are covered with the painted pedigree of the Tancreds—a planetary system of double stars, ending with the lonely circumference of our hero. As an *amari aliquid* to these aristocrats, the effigies of 'J. Gurth, swineherd to Sir R. T., Knt.,' hangs unabashed among them all—a humorous rustic, with a grizzly beard, and a twinkle in his eye which accounts for his immortality.

These are our limit: beyond, lie the penetralia of the brethren, and the serene adytum of Mrs Jellicoe the housekeeper. It remains for us only to descend—*facilis descensus Averni*, and that is the place we have yet to see. We climb down the rude cellar-stairs, and past the oubliette; we creep silently along dim passages full of damp *green* smells and cold thrilling airs, and awful with the neighbourhood of a ghostly presence; we reach a low black door; the rusty key of our hierophant grates in the unfrequented wards; we enter, and are mute.

Here is blackness of darkness and oblivious silence; the air has a sickly odour of ancientness and death; our feet stick to the cold clammy floor; we hear, but cannot see the fetid moisture trickling down the walls. Only one ray of light slopes down into the place, but it falls upon the thing we seek—it falls upon an *unburied coffin.*

And now, perhaps our readers would like to know what we mean, and what 'our hero' means, and, in fact, what is the meaning of these things in general. We will therefore take the liberty of introducing the following appropriate and authentic details. The Tancreds were a Yorkshire family of some note, the male line of which became extinct in the person of Charles Tancred, who died in 1754. Charles Tancred, who was a Cambridge man, and a barrister or bencher of Lincoln's Inn, had the misfortune—so common in those unhappy classes—to be jilted in his youth, and he thereupon made and executed two resolutions: first, to remain always a bachelor; and second, to illustrate the celebrated maxim of Pericopius, that benevolence is the child of selfishness, and the mother of eccentricity. In fact, he had on his death-bed the satisfaction of knowing that in converting his house and estate by will into an hospital—with a large sum in the funds to support it—he had extinguished his family, and impoverished his sisters and their children. The inmates of the hospital were to be twelve decayed gentlemen of the army and navy, and the three learned professions. They were to inhabit and be maintained in the hall, with L.30 apiece to spend per annum; and the park, with forty head of deer in it, was to be kept up for ever for their use. No condition that we know of was annexed to these munificent privileges, except the arduous one of attending daily service in the chapel. The vicar of the parish was to be the warden; but, notwithstanding these proofs of religious feeling, Charles Tancred decreed further—perhaps from modesty, or a disinclination to the society of worms—that his body should never be buried, but should remain for a sweet savour perpetually in the abode of his ancestors.

The will was at first strictly carried out; the gallant, reverend, and learned trustees took possession, peopled the hall with decayed gentlemen as required, and set the thing fairly agoing. How strange and how pleasant for that primeval twelve, when they first assembled in the hall, beneath the pendent coffin of their founder! If that was a *memento mori* to them, it was one of the jolliest kind, and the sight of it must have soothed the rancorous recollections of any jilted bachelor among them; for was it not through the conduct of that abominable female that they were here—joint-lords of a fine estate, with no bothering steward or teasing tenants to annoy—jovial monks without a cloister, enjoying all the comforts, and bound by none of the vows of Bolton or of Rivaulx? Lucky for them that they had passed the frantic heats of youth; for the warden was an easy abbot; night after night they toddled down to his cosy parsonage, and talked with him over the port of Mr Garrick, and the young king who could actually speak English; day after day they toddled into the village, and drank their home-brewed at the Tancred Arms, and patted the little Gurths on the head as they ran out wondering at the funny old gentlemen who had come to live at the hall. And in summer-time, how tranquilly they smoked their noonday pipes upon the lawny terrace! how benignantly they gazed out on the park—their own park, where the forty head of deer were continually performing feats of agility for their amusement!

Yes, they had a pleasant life of it; but alas! even twelve old gentlemen of the first respectability cannot always dwell together in peace. One may be a soldier, a doctor, or even a lawyer, without quite fulfilling a perfect morality; and besides, if philosophy had gone so far north, it might have discovered that these lay-brethren wanted above all things a *principle.* Principal won't do alone; you must spell it with an *e*, my friends, if you want to bind men together in any other bonds than those of kindred. Could you expect the fogies at White's to live in harmonious unity from morning to night, even under the auspices of an exclusive and aristocratic committee?

And so it came to pass that there arose strifes and dissensions in the fraternity. They chose a purveyor, and then quarrelled with him about the soup; they grudged one another the chief places in chapel, and the uppermost seats at dinner; they thought it strange when the warden shewed, as he sometimes did, that their nightly visits to the parsonage were becoming a bore. Oh, had there been but an Uncle Toby among them, to trace out ravelins and counterscarps in the orchard, and make a few timely breaches in the garden-wall! Yet even he would have had some unsympathising Shandy to annoy him; Bulkhead, R.N., would have demolished his works with a broadside of coarse invective, or the Rev. Growley Brimston would have shewn him that such amusements were no fit preparation for another world. And there were fears without as well as fightings within; lawsuits, promoted by the envy of disappointed collaterals, arose from time to time; and though they invariably terminated in favour of justice and the hospital, it was not pleasant, meanwhile, for the twelve old men whose comforts were at stake. At length, too, the glorious nineteenth century appeared, and the goddess of retrenchment shewed her clipped pinions to an admiring world. Even in Yorkshire, she was seen at last; and the trustees began to ask what *was* the use of keeping up the forty head of deer, and of maintaining a whole park for the use of fellows who could hardly crawl beyond the garden-door.

So they got an act of parliament—entituled an act for the regulation of attorneys and solicitors, and for improving the breed of horned cattle, and for other purposes—whereby the poor animals were instantaneously converted into venison for the million, and the broad old park was cleared, and hedged, and ploughed into fields, or else invaded by herds of menial cows and ignominious porkers. Bulkhead, R.N., and the Rev. Growley Brimston, were not sentimental, fortunately; but poor old M'Muller, the broken-down physician, was heard to say with a sigh that he wished the horns of the deer were in the belly—*abdomen* we call it now-a-days—of the trustees. However, the storm blew over the tea-cup: a new generation arose which knew not the deer-park; and all went well and smoothly till an event occurred which had well-nigh robbed Tancred Hall of its palladium, and done more than those impoverished collaterals to ruin and disperse the brethren.

After hanging in chains for many a long year from the roof of his own hall, the founder's body was removed into the chapel, there to be an object of affectionate solicitude to his protégés, and to point an effective moral from the pulpit just above. But familiarity did not breed respect; and, whether it were to gratify the senses or the feelings, poor Charles Tancred's coffin was again disturbed, and he was consigned to an open vault in one of the cellars, to sleep in peace till doom.

One day, however—and not very long ago either—the water of the household well was found to possess a new and peculiar flavour. Most of the brethren were acquainted with the neighbouring waters of Harrogate: was it possible that they were to possess in their own yard a constant supply of that delightful beverage? Alas! experience soon checked the pleasing thought; and then the warden, looking round for explanation, remembered with horror—THE COFFIN!

Yes, coffins are not quite impervious; and we have all of us, especially after death, a tendency to ooze and fritter into our kindred earth; and so it was that truth and Tancred were found in solution at the bottom of the well. Why not, indeed, when, as is well known, the dust of Cæsar was used for stopping bungholes? It was easy to dig a new well, and place the body elsewhere; but our friend the warden wisely determined to seize the moment of disgust, and remove for ever what he justly thought a scandal to his parish. 'This poor spirit,' said he, 'has been wandering a full century on the shore of Styx; let us charitably ferry it over, and lay it gently within the prayerful shades.' 'By all means,' wrote the trustees in reply: 'the nineteenth century is with us, and we perfectly agree with you; let it be done at once.'

Great was the excitement through the whole countryside when it became known that Squire Tancred, who died a hundred years ago, and had been above-ground ever since, was to lie in state in the old hall that night, and be buried like a Christian on the morrow. From hall, and farm, and cottage, they came in troops to see the wonder; and well they might, for truly it was what Rembrandt should paint and Hamlet's soul interpret. In a new coffin—for the old one had fallen in pieces—beneath a new velvet pall, and upon a new black bier, lay that strange superannuated corpse: above it was a glare of torches, driving back the darkness into far-off ghostly corners; around it, a whispering crowd, whose grandfathers were children when it ceased to live. Where were the tender women who closed those shrunken eyes, and folded that ragged ancient shroud? Where were the strong men who carried him out from this very house just a century ago, and left him alone with darkness in the church? Where were the mourners who should follow him to that church again to-morrow, and weep as they laid him in the moist bosom of our mother? The last of the Tancreds lay dead in his own mansion, and not one of those around him had ever seen his face, or possessed, by blood or friendship, the slenderest clue of sympathy to link them with his life.

So great a gulf is there between us and our great-grandfathers—so soon does affection transfer itself from our own progenitors to those who are the intellectual ancestry of our age. Think you that your descendants will care at all for you as they will for Tennyson or Carlyle? And this man, in the midst of his own dependents, in the centre of his own domain, found but one friend wise enough to save his body from the miserable outlawry to which he had condemned it; and that friend was the village pastor. Truly, as saith the prophet, the sight was 'significant of several things.'

But while the throng of silent rustics was passing through the hall, confused between awe and curiosity, where were the brethren of the hospital?

> When Tancred's buried, and not till then,
> The heir shall have his own again.

So ran the legend, which was whispered around the bier; and our friends, of all men, were least likely to forget it. The body of their founder was like to prove a Patroclus to these worthy Trojans; and they were at that moment assembled in secret conclave overhead, devising means for getting it out of the hands of the enemy, and defeating the odious machinations of their warden. No one had missed them at such a time; but it mattered not, for the poor old fellows had outlived both wit and energy, and could only storm and bluster at an inevitable fate. At last the eventful morning came; the brethren sat apart in their rooms up stairs, waiting sullenly for the close of a ceremony which was to exorcise them into an unkind world once more; whilst the warden, in hood and surplice, stood ready in the hall, satisfied and cheerful. All was tranquil and triumphant; the grave had been dug, and the old sexton, whose grandfather tolled the bell for this very corpse a hundred years ago, was tolling for it now; in half an hour, the mouldering remains of Charles Tancred would be safe.

Already the clerk had marshalled the funeral procession, with the vicar and himself at its head; already the villagers had formed in line along its route; the bearers were just setting their shoulders to the coffin, and all was in act to move, when, hold! the hall-door bursts open, and enter in hot haste a messenger of that *Deus ex machinâ* the electric telegraph.

'We have read the will again, and taken counsel's opinion; and the burial *must not* take place.' The warden's voice quivers as he reads these words aloud to the assembly. Man's will, not God's, must be done!

The corpse returns self-condemned to its cellar; the good vicar goes sorrowing home; the crowd slink away in a fresh wonder, or stay behind to gossip with the sexton as he fills up the empty grave; whilst the brethren emerge victorious from their cells, and subside once more—who knows for how long?—into the calm security of their *status quo*.

A WOMAN'S THOUGHTS ABOUT WOMEN.

FEMALE PROFESSIONS.

GRANTED, the necessity of something to do, and the self-dependence required for its achievement, we may go on to the very obvious question—*what* is a woman to do?

A question more easily asked than answered; and the numerous replies to which, now current in book, pamphlet, newspaper, and review, suggesting everything possible and impossible, from compulsory wifehood in Australia, to voluntary watchmaking at home, do at present rather confuse the matter than otherwise. No doubt, out of these 'many words,' which 'darken speech,' some plain word or two will one day take shape in action, so as to evolve a practical good. In the meantime, it does no harm to have the muddy pond stirred up a little; any disturbance is better than stagnation.

These Thoughts—however desultory and unsatisfactory, seeing the great need there is for deeds rather than words—are those of a 'working' woman, who has been such all her life, with opportunity of comparing the experience of other working women with her own; she therefore at least escapes the folly of talking about what she does not know.

Female professions, as distinct from what may be termed female handicrafts, which merit separate classification and discussion, may, I think, be thus divided: the instruction of youth; art; literature; and the vocation of public entertainment—including actresses, singers, musicians, and the like.

The first of these, being a calling universally wanted, and the easiest in which to win, at all events, daily bread, is the great chasm into which the helpless and penniless of our sex generally plunge; and this indiscriminate Quintus Curtianism, so far from filling up the gulf, widens it every hour. It must be so, while young women of all classes and all degrees of capability rush into governessing much as young men enter the church, because they think it a 'respectable' profession to get on in, and are fit for nothing else. Thus, the most important of ours, and the highest of all men's vocations, are both degraded—in so far as they can be degraded—by the unworthiness and incompetency of their professors.

If, in the most solemn sense, not one woman in five thousand is fit to be a mother, we may safely say that not two out of that number are fit to be governesses. Consider all that the office implies: very many of a mother's duties, added to which, considerable mental attainments, firmness of character, good sense, good temper, good breeding; patience, gentleness, loving-kindness. In short, every quality that goes to make a perfect woman, is required of her who presumes to undertake the education of one single little child.

Does any one pause to reflect what a 'little child' is? Not sentimentally, as a creature to be philosophised upon, painted and poetised; nor selfishly, as a kissable, scoldable, sugar-plum-feedable plaything; but as a human soul and body, to be moulded, instructed, and influenced, in order that it likewise may mould, instruct, and influence unborn generations. And yet, in face of this awful responsibility, wherein each deed and word of hers may bear fruit, good or ill, to indefinite ages, does nearly every educated gentlewoman, thrown upon her own resources, nearly every half-educated 'young person' who wishes by that means to step out of her own class into the one above it, enter upon the vocation of a governess.

Whether it really is her vocation, she never stops to think; and yet, perhaps in no calling is a personal bias more indispensable. For knowledge, and the power of imparting it intelligibly, are two distinct and often opposite qualities; the best student by no means necessarily makes the best teacher: nay, when both faculties are combined, they are sometimes neutralised by some fault of disposition, such as want of temper or of will. And allowing all these, granting every possible intellectual and practical competency, there remains still doubtful the moral influence, which, according to the source from which it springs, may ennoble or corrupt a child for life.

All these are facts so trite and so patent, that one would almost feel it superfluous to state them, did we not see how utterly they are ignored day by day by even sensible people; how parents go on lavishing expense on their house, dress, and entertainments—everything but the education of their children; sending their boys to cheap boarding-schools, and engaging for their daughters governesses at L.20 a year, or daily tuition at sixpence an hour; and how, as a natural result, thousands of incapable girls, and ill-informed, unscrupulous women, go on professing to teach everything under the sun, adding lie upon lie, and meanness upon meanness—often through no voluntary wickedness but sheer helplessness, because they must either do that or starve!

Yet, all the while we expect our rising generation to turn out perfection; instead of which we find it—what?

I do solemnly aver, having seen more than one generation of young girls grow up into womanhood—that the fairest and best specimens of our sex that I have ever known, have been those the least indebted to, or familiar with, either schools or governesses.

Surely such a fact as this—I put it to general experience, whether it is not a fact?—indicates some great flaw in the carrying out of this large branch of women's work. How is it to be remedied? I believe, like all reformations, it must begin at home—with the governesses themselves.

Unless a woman has a decided pleasure and facility in teaching, a thorough knowledge of everything she professes to impart, a liking for children, and above all, a strong moral sense of her responsibility towards them, I hold that for her to enrol herself in the scholastic order is absolute profanation. Better turn shopwoman, needlewoman, lady's-maid—even become an honest housemaid, and learn how to sweep a floor, than heave her own soul, and peril many other souls by entering upon what is, or ought to be, a female 'ministry,' unconsecrated, and incapable of the work.

If capable, doubtless she will find it. Not easily, alas! nor soon; but she will find it; for conscientious attainments rarely fail in the long-run to obtain their end. There is no influence so deeply felt in a house, or so anxiously kept, if only for self-interest, as the influence of a good governess over the children. And, as in most social questions, where to theorise is easy, and to practise very difficult, I think it will be found that the silent remedying of an evil is safer than the loud outcry against it. If every governess, so far as her power extends, would strive to elevate the character of her profession by elevating its members, many of these acknowledged wrongs and miseries of governess-ship would gradually right themselves. A higher standard of capability would weed out much cumbersome mediocrity; and, competition lessened, the value of labour would rise. I say 'the value of labour,' because, when we women do work, we must learn to rate ourselves at no ideal and picturesque value, but simply as *labourers*—fair and honest competitors in the field of the world; and our wares as mere merchandise, where money's worth alone brings money, or has any right to bring it.

This applies equally to the two next professions, art and literature. I put art first, as being the most difficult—perhaps, in its highest form, almost impossible to women. There are many reasons for this, in the long course of study necessary for a painter, in the not unnatural repugnance of 'society' to women's drawing from 'the life,' attending anatomical dissections, and so on—all of which are indispensable to one who would plumb the depths and scale the heights of the most arduous of the liberal arts. Whether any woman will ever do this, remains yet to be proved. Meantime, many lower and yet honourable positions, are open to female handlers of the brush.

But in literature, we own no such boundaries; there we meet men on level ground—and, shall I say it?—we do often beat them in their own field. We are as fine historians, as clear explanators of science, as good novelists, almost—except for Thackeray—and within the last year we have proved that we can write as great a poem as any man among them all. Any publisher's list, any handful of weekly or monthly periodicals, can testify to our power of entering boldly on the literary profession, and pursuing it wholly, self-devotedly, and self-reliantly, thwarted by no hardships, and content with no height short of the highest.

So much for the best of us—women whose work will float down the ages, safe and sure; there is no need to speak of it or them. But there is another secondary class among us, neither 'geniuses' nor ordinary women—aspiring to both destinies, and usually achieving neither: of these it is necessary to say a word.

In any profession, there is nothing, short of being absolutely evil, which is so injurious, so fatal, as mediocrity. To the amateur who writes 'sweetly' or paints 'prettily,' her work is mere recreation; and though it may be less improving for the mind to do small things on your own account, than to be satisfied with appreciating the greater doings of other people, still, it is harmless enough, if it stops there. But all who leave domestic criticism, to plunge into the open arena of art—I use the word in its widest sense—must abide by art's severest laws. One of these is, that every person who paints a common-place picture, or writes a mediocre book, contributes temporarily—happily, only temporarily—to lower the standard of public taste, fills unworthily some better competitor's place, and without achieving any private good, does a positive wrong to the community at large.

One is often tempted to believe, in the great influx of small talents which now deluges us, that if half the books written, and pictures painted, were made into one great bonfire, it would be their shortest, easiest, and safest way of illuminating the world.

Therefore, let men do as they will—poor fellows, they are often ten times vainer and more ambitious than we!—but I would advise every woman to examine herself and judge herself, morally and intellectually, by the sharpest canons of criticism before she attempts art or literature, either for abstract fame or as a means of livelihood. Let her take to heart, humbly, the telling truth, that

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,

and be satisfied that the smallest perfect achievement is nobler than the grandest failure. But having, after mature deliberation, chosen her calling, and conscientiously believing it is her calling—that in which she shall do most good, and best carry out the aim of her existence—let her fulfil to the last iota its solemn requirements.

These entail more, much more, than flighty young genius or easy-satisfied mediocrity ever dreams of: labour incessant, courage inexhaustible, under difficulties, misfortunes, and rebuffs of every conceivable kind—added thereto not unfrequently the temperament to which these things come hardest. *Le génie c'est la patience;* and though there is a truth beyond it, since all the patience in the world will not serve as a substitute for genius, still, never was a truer word spoken than this of old Buffon's. Especially as applied to women, when labourers in a profession which demands from them, no less than from men, the fervent application, and sometimes the total devotion of a lifetime.

For, high as the calling is, it is not always, in the human sense, a happy one; it often results in, if it does not spring from, great sacrifices; and is full of thousand misconstructions, annoyances, and temptations. Nay, since ambition is a quality far oftener deficient in us than in the other sex, its very successes are less sweet to women than to men. Many a 'celebrated authoress' or 'exquisite paintress' must have felt the heart-truth in *Aurora Leigh:*

I might have been a common woman, now,
And happier, less known and less left alone,
Perhaps a better woman after all—
With chubby children hanging round my neck,
To keep me low and wise. Ah me! the vines
That bear such fruit are proud to stoop with it—
The palm stands upright in a realm of sand.

And, setting aside both these opposite poles of the female character and lot, it remains yet doubtful whether the maiden-aunt who goes from house to house, perpetually busy and useful—the maiden house-mother, who keeps together an orphan family, having all the cares, and only half the joys of maternity or mistress-ship—even the active, bustling 'old maid,' determined on setting everybody to rights, and having a finger in every pie that needs her, and a few that don't—I question whether each of these women has not a more natural, and therefore happier existence, than any 'woman of genius' that ever enlightened the world.

But happiness is not the first nor the only thing on earth. Whosoever has entered upon this vocation in the right spirit, let her keep to it, neither afraid nor ashamed. The days of blue-stockings are over: it is a notable fact that the best housekeepers, the neatest needlewomen, the most discreet managers of their own and others' affairs, are ladies whose names the world cons over in library lists and exhibition catalogues. I could give them now—except that the world has no possible business with them, except to read their books and look at their pictures. It must be something deficient in the women themselves, if the rude curiosity of this said public is ever allowed to break in upon that dearest right of every woman—the inviolable sanctity of her home.

Without—in these books and by these pictures—let it always be a fair fight, and no quarter. To exact consideration merely on account of her sex, is the poorest cowardice. She has entered the neutral realm of pure intellect—has donned brain-armour, and must carry on with lawful, consecrated weapons a combat, of which the least reward in her eyes, in which she never can freeze up or burn out either woman-tears or woman-smiles, will be the public acknowledgment called Fame.

This Fame, as gained in art or literature, is certainly of a purer and safer kind than that which falls to the lot of the female *artiste.*

I believe that no human gift is given to be hid under a bushel; that a Sarah Siddons, a Rachel, or a Jenny Lind, being created, were certainly not created for nothing. There seems no reason why a great actress or vocalist should not exercise her talents to the utmost for the world's benefit, and her own; nor that any genius, boiling and bursting up to find expression, should be pent down, cruelly and dangerously, because it refuses to run in the ordinary channel of feminine development. But the last profession, of the four which I have enumerated as the only paths at present open to women, is the one which is the most full of perils and difficulties, on account of the personality involved in its exercise.

We may paint scores of pictures, write shelves-full of books—the errant children of our brain may be familiar half over the known world, and yet we ourselves sit as quiet by our chimney-corner, live a life as simple and peaceful as any happy 'common woman' of them all. But with the artiste it is very different; she needs to be constantly before the public, not only mentally, but physically; the general eye becomes familiar, not merely with her genius, but her corporeality; and every comment of admiration or blame awarded her, becomes necessarily an instant and personal criticism. This of itself is a position contrary to the instinctive something—call it reticence, modesty, shyness—what you will—which is inherent in every one of Eve's daughters. Any young girl, standing before a large party in her first *tableau vivant*—any singing-pupil at a public examination—any boy-lover of some adorable actress, at the moment when he first thinks of that goddess as *his wife*, will understand what I mean.

But that is by no means the chief objection; for the feeling of personal shyness dies out, and, in the true artiste, becomes altogether merged in the love and inspiration of her art—the inexplicable fascination of which turns the many-eyed gazing mass into a mere 'public,' of which the performer is individually no more conscious than was the Pythoness of her curled and scented Greek auditors, when she felt on her tripod the coming of the unconquerable, inevitable god. The saddest phase of artiste-life—which is, doubtless, the natural result of this constant presence before the public eye, this incessant struggle for the public's personal verdict—is its intense involuntary egotism.

No one can have seen anything of theatrical or musical circles without noticing this—the incessant recurrence to '*my* part,' '*my* song,' 'what the public think of *me*.' In the hand-to-hand struggle for the capricious public's favour, this sad selfishness is apparently inevitable. 'Each for himself' seems implanted in masculine nature, for its own preservation; but when it comes to 'each for *her*self'—when you see the fairest Shakspeare heroines turn pale at the name of a rival impersonator—when Miss This cannot be asked to a party for fear of meeting Madame That, or if they do meet, for all their harmony and smiles, you perceive their backs are up, like two strange cats meeting at a parlour-door—I say, this is the most lamentable of all results, not absolutely vicious, which the world, and the necessity of working in it, effect on women.

And for this reason, the profession of public entertainment, in all its gradation, from the inspired *tragedienne* to the poor chorus-singer, is, above any profession I know, to be marked with a spiritual Humane Society's pole, '*Dangerous*.' Not after the vulgar notion: we have among us too many chaste, matronly actresses, and charming maiden-vocalists, to enter now into the old question about the 'respectability' of the stage; but on account of the great danger to temperament, character, and mode of thought to which such a life peculiarly exposes its followers.

But, if a woman has chosen it—I repeat in this as in any other—let her not forego it; for in every occupation, the worthiness, like the 'readiness,' 'is all.' Never let her be moulded by her calling, but mould her calling to herself; being, as every woman ought to be, the woman first, the artiste afterwards. And, doubtless, so are many; doubtless one could find, not only among the higher ranks of this profession, where genius itself acts as a purifying and refining fire, but in its lower degrees, many who, under the glare of the footlights and the din of popular applause, have kept their freshness and singleness of character unfaded to the end. Ay, even among poor ballet-dancers, capering with set rouged smiles and leaden hearts—coarse screaming concert-singers, doing sham pathos at a guinea a night—flaunting actresses-of-all-work, firmly believing themselves the best Juliet or Lady Macbeth extant, and yet condescending to take ever so small a part—even the big-headed '*princess*' of an Easter extravaganza, for the sake of the old parents, or the fiddler-husband and the sickly babies at home. No doubt, many of them live—let us rather say endure—a life as pure, as patient, as self-denying, as that of hundreds of timid, daintily protected girls, and would-be correct matrons, who shrink in safe privacy from the very thought of these. But Heaven counts and cares for all.

Therefore, in this perilous road, double honour be unto those who walk upright, double pity unto those who fall!

Conning over again these desultory Thoughts, it seems to me they all come to neither more nor less than this: that since a woman, by choosing a definite profession, must necessarily quit the kindly shelter and sweet negativeness of a private life, and assume a substantive position, it is her duty not hastily to decide, and before deciding, in every way to count the cost. But having chosen, let her fulfil her lot, and keep to it. No hesitations, no regrets, no compromises—they are at once cowardly and vain. She may have missed or foregone much;—I repeat, our natural and happiest life is when we lose ourselves in the exquisite absorption of home, the delicious retirement of dependent love; but what she has, she has, and nothing can ever take it from her. Nor is it, after all, a small thing for any woman—be she governess, painter, author, or artiste—to feel that, higher or lower, according to her degree, she ranks among that crowned band who, whether or not they are the happy ones, are elected to the heaven-given honour of being the Workers of the world.

A GLIMPSE OF SARAWAK.

On the 11th of August 1852, I embarked at Singapore in a small trading-schooner bound for Sarawak; and aided by a favourable breeze and a rapid tide, we were soon carried past the verdant shores of the Straits of Malacca, into the China Sea, across which we stretched direct for Borneo. After four days' sail the outlines of the mountains of that island appeared in the distant horizon, blue and bright through the clear atmosphere, gradually rising up from the waters and darkening in colour, and shewing more clearly their spurs and valleys as we closed in with the land. Next appeared the low level coast-line, black with the forests of centuries, whose dark and heavy verdure stretched in unbroken mass over the whole face of the country, far away over and beyond the tops of the highest and most distant mountains. As we passed along, the coast-line was seen to be occasionally broken by the mouths of large rivers, which discharge their waters through gaps in the ceaseless and apparently impenetrable jungle, and which, by their broad and stately streams, afford access to the interior of the country. We were becalmed for some time off Cape Datu—a high bold promontory that projects far into the sea—till, a heavy squall coming down from the top of the bluff, necessitated a rapid reduction of sail, but bore us at the same time gallantly over the waves. As the night closed in, the clouds gathered in masses; but the almost incessant play of sheet-lightning around the horizon afforded a sufficiency of light by which to continue our course; and about midnight we cast anchor off the Santubong entrance of the Sarawak river.

Next morning the weather was stormy and hazy; but unpropitious as the day was, it gave us a favourable idea of the picturesque character of the country. On one side of the river, close to its mouth, and close also to the beach, Santubong mountain shot up almost perpendicularly to the height of nearly 3000 feet, stretching away seaward in a long irregular, broken and picturesque range, and terminating in a bold bluff cape, round whose base the waters of the China Sea heaved and broke. On the other side rose a lower and less striking hill, between which and Santubong the river opened, like the open gate of an avenue, inviting us to explore the country. There we entered with the flood-tide, and in due time arrived at Kuching, the capital of the world-famed Sarawak.

I do not intend to repeat the story—so well known through the works of Captains Keppell and Mundy—of the manner in which Sir James Brooke became rajah of Sarawak; I may, however, be pardoned giving the following illustration of the cool manner in which he looks danger in the face, and prepares against it.

When Mr Brooke first arrived at Kuching in the *Royalist*, he landed and paid his respects to Muda Hassim, the Malay rajah of the place; and in return invited that prince, with several of his nobles and their followers, to visit him on board his yacht. I have shared in the surprise which I have often heard expressed, that Mr Brooke should have invited on board his yacht a Malay prince and his followers, of whom he knew comparatively nothing, except that they belonged to a race whose name is synonymous in the east with ferocity, treachery, and blood-thirstiness, and who, wherever they are known, are noted for their addiction to piracy. It is true, they are by no means so bad as they are represented to be; and it is equally true that they possess many fine qualities, which are discovered upon closer acquaintance; but still the general character they bear, and by which alone Mr Brooke could have known them, is that of treacherous pirates. Mr Brooke, however, resolved to return Muda Hassim's hospitality, without exhibiting either fear or suspicion, while at the same time he took effectual measures to baffle any attempt at treachery, should such be made. On deck, the crew were drawn up under arms, acting ostensibly as a guard of honour to receive the prince, but prepared for hostilities in case of necessity; while at the same time, the ship's guns were loaded with grape, and trained so as to sweep the deck at the first discharge. In the cabin, where Mr Brooke was to receive his visitors, he was seated on a sofa with a broad table placed before him, in order to prevent any sudden stab with a kriss, and under the pillow, which lay carelessly beside him, a pair of loaded pistols were concealed. Above the sofa, a large mirror was placed, and behind the mirror were stationed four men, each with four loaded muskets, who on a given signal were to throw down the mirror, and shew themselves armed. Thus fortified, Mr Brooke sat at his ease, and received his distinguished visitors with gentlemanly courtesy. No attempt at violence was made; and Muda Hassim remained till the day of his death ignorant of the precautions taken against his possible treachery.

On another occasion, after the present Sarawak government was established, a chief of the Sarebas Dyaks, by name Lingire, made an attempt to take Mr Brooke's head. He came to Sarawak with several war-boats, ostensibly to pay a visit to the Malay *datus* or magistrates of that place, and moored his boats in the river opposite their campongs, a few hundred yards above Rajah Brooke's house. At length, one night when the tide suited his purpose, he dropped silently down the river to the rajah's wharf, fastened his boats there, and landed with eighty armed men. He then walked up to the house, entered the hall where the rajah was seated at dinner entertaining all the European inhabitants of the settlement, and his men, placing themselves in a semicircle around the table, squatted down, intending to spring upon their victims in the confusion of clearing away the dinner. As soon as Mr Brooke saw Lingire enter with so many men, he suspected his object, and calling a Malay servant who fortunately understood English, he ordered him to cross the river and tell the datus to bring over their men as quickly as possible. This being spoken in English, was not understood by the Dyaks, who, thinking that the rajah had merely given some order about the dinner, saw the servant leave the room without suspicion, and sat still, quietly and intently surveying the scene before them, and waiting the signal of attack from their chief. In the meantime, the Europeans continued their dinner with the best appetite they could, and knowing that their safety depended on their prolonging the meal as much as possible, they were in no hurry to conclude it. From the painful state of suspense in which they were held, they were at length delivered by the arrival of the Datu Tummang-gong—a brave old pirate who, in his day, has carried on his depredations within sight of Singapore—who entered the room at the head of thirty Malays. He at once placed himself between the Europeans and Dyaks; and turning upon Lingire, he applied to him many epithets the reverse of complimentary, told him that he knew what he had come for, and ordered him instantly to go down to his boats. The Dyak paused; the odds were eighty to thirty, and he seemed inclined to try the chances of a combat; but while he hesitated, the Datu Bandar entered with fifty men, and he then slunk off to his boats like a beaten dog. When he arrived at Sarebas, he gave it out publicly that his object was to have taken the rajah's head, and he further expressed his determination still to have it; nay, he even went so far as to make a basket for the special purpose of containing it after it should be captured. He now appears, however, to have thought better of the matter; for when I last saw him, he was seated at the rajah's table, talking and laughing and drinking arrack.

The Sarawak territory, as seen from the sea, presents a long low dark coast-line, covered with trees to the water's edge, and occasionally intersected by the mouths of rivers, or broken by bold rocky promontories that project far into the sea. Behind the coast-line, the ground rises in many places into hills and mountains, some of them round and swelling, and covered, like all the rest of the country, with dark jungle; others abrupt and craggy in the extreme, with trees and bushes shooting from every crevice, and creepers and parasites hanging from every cliff and from every tree.

On entering one of the rivers which cleaves its way through the apparently impenetrable jungle, the traveller finds himself in a wide open channel, both sides of which are crowded with the same dark and heavy foliage that covered the coast, and which, not content with the possession of the land, seems to aspire to that of the water too, by sending forests of mangroves far into the river. In other parts, the banks are lined by thousands of nipa palms, whose long bending leaves, fringed with their dark and sharp-pointed leaflets, wave gracefully in the breeze, forming the foreground of the mighty jungle that towers up behind. Higher up the river, where the banks are no longer swampy, the mangroves and nipas disappear, but the primeval forest still continues in undiminished and unchanging magnificence; and as the silent stream bears us swiftly onwards over its still and placid waters, glowing with the tints of a tropical evening sky, we pass point after point, and traverse reach after reach, each bank and every change of scene presenting the same wild and lonely grandeur and luxuriance. If a pigeon flies overhead, a monkey leaps from a bough, or the loud and discordant note of some feathered denizen of the forest rings through the air, it is the only sign of life the vast jungle exhibits, except the shrill chirping of the tree grasshoppers which have commenced their evening-song, or the irritating attacks which compel attention to the existence of sand-flies and mosquitoes.

As we ascend the river above the influence of the tides, the channel, though it still continues deep, becomes very narrow, and often appears almost over-arched by the vegetation which clothes its banks. Not only do enormous trees shoot up their giant forms to the height of hundreds of feet, but the margin of the river between the trees and the stream itself is lined with a dense mass of vegetation, as thick and impenetrable, and ten times as high, as a quickset-hedge. One of the most remarkable of the plants that form this fringe to the margin of the stream, is called by the

Dyaks *mudiang*, and exactly resembles the plant of the pine-apple, only that it grows upon a stem some twenty feet high. Its fruit, also, has much the appearance of the pine-apple, but is hard and woody within, and utterly unfit for food. These plants grow in great numbers in the mud that forms the margin of the stream, and are the resort of troops of monkeys, which leap, grin, and chatter among them during the day, and at night hang asleep upon them within oars-length of the passing boat.

Higher up the river still, it again changes its appearance; instead of being deep and muddy, it becomes shallow and clear, assuming to a considerable extent the character of a mountain stream. The bottom is sandy or stony, and the fish are seen playing in the pools; the banks are dry and free from mud, allowing the large trees of the jungle to spring up from the margin of the stream, and to interlace their gigantic branches high overhead. Then it is that the forest is seen in all its beauty and grandeur. Tall trunks, straight as an arrow, support the unbroken shade of verdure which clings to their boughs, while long and fantastic creepers embrace the vast columns with their tangled net-work, and hang like festoons from one to another. Occasionally, accident may have cleared a considerable space along the banks, leaving one vast tree standing in comparative solitude, and then is seen the monarch of the forest in all his glory. A vast, massive trunk rises straight as a ship's mast, and without a single branch, to the height of 200 feet or more; and from the top of this gigantic column, diverge the spreading branches, covered with their heavy masses of dark-green foliage, the whole forming as fine an object as the eye can rest on.

Sometimes these large trees are found in inconvenient proximity to the traveller: they fall across the stream, and bar his progress. If the trunk is immersed so deeply as that there are three or four inches of water on any part of it, the canoe is unloaded, and the crew, jumping into the water, drag her over the impediment; while if it happens to be resting at a height of five or six inches above the surface of the stream, she is again unloaded, and pushed underneath it.

As the trees seldom fall perfectly flat across the surface of the water, one or other of these methods of passing them is generally practicable; but sometimes neither of them can be followed, in which case, there is no other resource than the laborious and tedious process of cutting the trunk through. As there are also shallows and rapids, as well as logs of wood in the rivers, it will easily be imagined that ascending these smaller streams is a toilsome method of journeying; and so numerous are impediments of one kind or another, that I have sometimes seen the crew wading or swimming continuously for several hours.

I have thus endeavoured to give an idea of the country as seen in going up one of the large rivers. I shall now ask the reader to take a walk with me into the jungle. Jungle is of two kinds—old and young. Old jungle is simply the forest, young jungle is the vegetation which springs up wherever old jungle has been cut down. It consists of a dense mass of grass, reeds, and bushes, impervious to man; and when necessity compels him to take his course through it, he must cut his way with his *parang* or chopping-knife, hewing out a path as he goes along. Walking in old jungle, however, is very different. There, there is comparatively little underwood; the ground is moist and soft with decaying leaves; the air is cool and pleasant; and the enormous trees whose foliage completely keeps off the sun, form a 'leafy labyrinth' of the most imposing and extensive dimensions. Every tenth tree is a giant, whose vast stem, straight as a ship's mast, shoots up aloft till its almost undiminished diameter is hid by the foliage of those around it, and from the visible height of the lower trees which conceal its top, we are left to imagine the size of the higher. Some of them are covered with the strangest-looking creepers and parasites which clothe the stem and festoon the boughs; and occasionally we come to a tree in full flower, which, if it be partially isolated, so as to admit of its being seen from below, affords one of the most beautiful spectacles which the vegetable creation can present. Altogether, though the general appearance of the forest is, except as regards the size of the trees which compose it, very much like that of a wood at home, still the most cursory examination will not fail to shew something very unlike any of the vegetable productions of the temperate zone. Perhaps, however, one of the most striking features of the jungle is the almost entire absence of animal life which it displays—an absence perfectly surprising to the European visitor, who, from the jungle's being unfrequented and almost untrodden by man, is prepared to find it filled with tenants of one kind or other. But no; he walks along amidst this luxuriance of vegetation, and scarcely sees an animal. Almost the only signs of life he discovers are the harsh cry of the hornbill, the plaintive wail of the *wawa* or long-armed ape, and loud but melancholy groaning of the *rasong* or long-nosed monkey; or perhaps the sight of a lizard ascending the rough trunk of some vast tree, or a snake rustling among the fallen leaves or twining among the branches. It is true, that where there are many fruit-trees, the scene is different; there, troops of monkeys abound, and leap and sport among the boughs, now shaking the forest in very wantonness, again sitting gravely on some lower bough, grinning secure defiance on their two-legged brethren below, treating with majestic contempt the efforts of the Dyaks to frighten them, and gazing with the bliss of ignorance on the terrors of the gun. They are of many hues and of all sizes, from the orang-outang, whose body is as large as that of a tall man, to the smaller species of a span long. There are many birds, too, of different kinds, generally with harsh voices and brilliant plumage, which conceal themselves among the thick leaves, or flit away on too near an approach. Such assemblages of animals, however, are the exception; the rule in the forest is, as I have already stated, great luxuriance of vegetation, and great scarcity of animal life; and in this respect, Borneo at present, I should imagine, somewhat resembles the account given by geologists of England during the formation of the coal. If it be so, it is strange to find the state of our own island many thousand ages ago paralleled by the present state of another island many thousand miles distant.

There is yet another view of the country which I shall endeavour to present—namely, that witnessed from the summit of a lofty mountain. From such a position, as far as the spectator's eye can reach, he looks down upon a generally flat but somewhat undulating country, with hills of various forms and sizes scattered around, some of them round and swelling, some with sharp peaks and ridges, and some abrupt and craggy in the extreme, but all of them covered with the same dark and heavy verdure which overspreads the face of the country, except where some limestone cliff gleams through the mass of vegetation which elsewhere shrouds it. In the low ground, he sees the winding rivers pursuing their tortuous course through the unbroken forest, now appearing lustrous and silvery in the light, now red and muddy as they roll along almost at his feet, now buried in the tall trees which clothe their banks, and again reappearing at a distance brighter and more lustrous than ever. The vast expanse of forest spread out before him induces ideas somewhat akin to those awakened by gazing on the ocean from a sea-side cliff. There is the same extent of prospect, the same monotony of scene, and the same feeling of solitude in the one case as in the other; and this similarity of landscape induces a similarity of ideas, cutting off the soul, as it were, from immediate contact with his fellows, and opening it to the greatness and the majesty of that Power who created alike the ocean and the forest.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XCII.—COUP D'ŒIL OF THE CAMP.

For some minutes I stood motionless as a statue; I stirred neither hand nor foot, lest the movement should catch the eye either of the horse-guards or those moving around the fires. I had already donned my plumed head-dress, before climbing out of the channel: my first thought was to replace my pistols in the belt behind my back. The movement was stealthily made; and with like stealthy action, I suffered the mantle of jaguar-skins to drop from my shoulders, and hang to its full length. I had saved the robe from getting wet; and its ample skirt now served me in concealing my soaked breech-cloth as well as the upper half of my leggings. These and the moccasins were, of course, saturated with water, but I had not much uneasiness about that. In a prairie-camp, and upon the banks of a deep stream, an Indian with wet leggings could not be a spectacle to excite suspicion; there would be many reasons why my counterpart might choose to immerse his copper-coloured extremities in the river. Moreover, the buckskin—dressed Indian-fashion—was speedily casting the water; it would soon drip dry, or even if wet, would scarcely be observed under such a light.

The spot where I had 'landed' chanced to be one of the least conspicuous in the whole area of the camp. I was just between two lights—the red glare of the camp-fires, and the mellower beams of the moon; and the atmospheric confusion occasioned by the meeting of the distinct kinds of light favoured me, by producing a species of optical delusion. It was but slight, and I could easily be seen from the centre of the camp, but not with sufficient distinctness for my disguise to be penetrated by any one; therefore, it was hardly probable that any of the savages would approach or trouble their heads about me. I might pass for one of themselves indulging in a solitary saunter, yielding himself to a moment of abstraction or melancholy. I was well enough acquainted with Indian life to know that there was nothing *outré* or unlikely in this behaviour; such conduct was perfectly *en règle*.

I did not remain long on that spot—only long enough to catch the salient features of the scene. I saw there were many fires, and around each was grouped a number of human forms—some squatted, some standing. The night was cold enough to make them draw near to the burning logs; and for this reason, but few were wandering about—a fortunate circumstance for me.

There was one fire larger than the rest; from its dimensions, it might be termed a bonfire, such as is made by the flattering and flunkeyish peasantry of old-world lands when they welcome home the squire and the count. It was placed directly in front of the solitary tent, and not a dozen paces from its entrance. Its blazing pile gave forth a flood of red light that reached even to the spot where I stood, and flickered in my face. I even fancied I could feel its warmth upon my cheeks.

Around this fire were many forms of men—all of them standing up. I could see the faces of those who were upon its further side, but only the figures of these on the nearer. The former I could see with almost as much distinctness as if I had been close beside them; I could trace the lineaments of their features—the painted devices on their breasts and faces—the style of their habiliments.

The sight of these last somewhat astonished me. I had expected to see red-skinned warriors in leggings, moccasins, and breech-cloth, with heads naked or plumed, and shoulders draped under brown robes of buffalo-skin. Some such there were, but not all of them were so costumed; on the contrary, I beheld savages shrouded in serapés and cloaks of broadcloth, with calzoneros on their legs, and upon their heads huge hats of black glaze—regular Mexican sombreros! In short, I beheld numbers of them in full Mexican costume!

Others, again, were dressed somewhat in a military fashion, with helmets or stiff shakos, ill-fighting uniform coats of red or blue cloth, oddly contrasting with the brown buckskin that covered their legs and feet.

With some astonishment, I observed these 'fancy dresses;' but my surprise passed away, when I reflected as to who were the men before me, and whence they had lately come; where they had been, and on what errand. It was no travesty, but a scene of actual life. The savages were clad in the spoils they had captured from civilisation.

I need not have been at such pains with my toilet; under any guise, I could scarcely have looked odd in the midst of such a motley crew: even my own uniform might have passed muster—all except the colour of my skin.

Fortunately, a few of the band still preserved their native costume—a few appeared in full paint and plumes—else I should have been *too Indian* for such a company.

It cost not a minute to note these peculiarities, nor did I stay to observe them minutely; my eyes were in search of Isolina.

I cast inquiring glances on all sides; I scrutinised the groups around the different fires; I saw others—women—whom I knew to be captives, but I saw not her.

I scanned their forms and the faces of those who were turned towards me. A glance would have been enough; I could easily have recognised her face under the firelight—under any light. It was not before me.

'In the tent—in the tent: she must be there?'

I hastened to move away from the spot where I had hitherto been standing. My eye, quickened by the necessity of action, had fallen upon the copse that covered the entire background of the camp. At a glance I detected the advantage offered by its shadowy cover.

The tent was placed close to the edge of the timber; and in front of the tent, as already stated, was the great fire. Plainly, this was the gravitating point—the centre of motive and motion. If aught of interest was to be enacted, there would lie the scene. In the lodge or near it would she be found—certainly she must be there; and there I resolved to seek her.

CHAPTER XCIII.

A FRIENDLY ENCOUNTER.

Just then the shrill voice of a crier pealed through the camp, and I observed an unusual movement. I could not make out what the man said, but the peculiar intonation told that he was uttering some signal or summons. Something of interest was about to transpire.

The Indians now commenced circling around the blazing pile, meeting and passing each other, as if threading the mazes of some silent and solemn dance. Others were seen hastening up from distant parts of the camp, as if to observe the actions of those around the fire, or join with them in the movement.

I did not wait to watch them; their attention thus occupied, gave me an opportunity of reaching the copse unobserved, and, without further ado, I started towards it.

I walked slowly, and with an assumed air of careless indifference. I counterfeited the Comanche walk—not that bold free port—the magnificent and inimitable stride, so characteristic of Chippewa and Shawano, of Huron and Iroquois—but the shuffling gingery step of an English jockey, for such in reality is the gait of the Comanche Indian when afoot.

I must have played my part well. A savage, crossing from the horse-guards towards the great fire, passed near me, and hailed me by name:

'*Wakono!*' cried he.

'*Que cosa?*' (Well—what matter?) I replied in Spanish, imitating as well as I could the Indian voice and accent. It was a venture, but I was taken at a straight, and could not well remain silent.

The man appeared some little surprised at being addressed in the language of Mexico; nevertheless, he understood it, and made rejoinder.

'You hear the summons, Wakono? Why do you not come forward? The council meets; Hissoo-royo is already there.'

I understood what was said, more from the Indian's gestures than his speech, though the words 'summons,' 'council,' and the name 'Hissoo-royo,' helped me to comprehend his meaning. I chanced to know the Comanche epithets for the two first, and also that Hissoo-royo (the Spanish wolf) was the Indian appellation of the Mexican renegade.

Though I understood what was said, I was not prepared with a reply. I dared not risk the answer in Spanish; for I knew not the extent of Wakono's proficiency in the Andalusian tongue.

I felt myself in a dilemma; and the importunate savage—no doubt some friend of Wakono himself—appeared determined to stick to me. How was I to get rid of him?

A happy idea came to my relief. Assuming an air of extreme dignity, and as though I did not wish to be disturbed in my meditations, I raised my hand and waved the man a parting salute: at the same time, I turned my head, and walked slowly away.

The Indian accepted the *congé*, and moved off, but evidently with an air of reluctance. As I glanced back over my shoulder, I could see him parting from the spot, with a hesitating step; no doubt somewhat astonished at the strange behaviour of his friend Wakono.

I did not look back again until I had placed myself under the shadow of the timber; then I turned to reconnoitre: my friend had continued on; I saw him just entering among the crowd that circled around the great fire.

Screened from observation by the shadow, I could now pause and reflect. The trifling incident that had caused me some apprehension, had also helped me to some useful knowledge: First, I had learned my own name; second, that a council was about to take place; and thirdly, that the renegade, Hissoo-royo, had something to do with the council.

This was knowledge of importance; combined with my previous information, everything was now made clear. This council could be no other than the jury-trial between the renegade and the yet nameless chief; the same that was to decide to which belonged the right of property in my betrothed. It was about to meet; it had not assembled as yet. Then had I arrived in time. Neither white savage nor red savage had yet come into possession; neither had dared to lay hand on the coveted and priceless gem.

Isolina was still safe—thus singularly preserved from brutal contact. These dogs in the manger, their mutual jealousy had proved her protection! I was consoled by the thought—strange source of consolation!

I was in time, but where was she? From my new position I had a still better view of the camp, its fires and its denizens. She was nowhere to be seen!

'In the lodge, then—she must certainly be there—or'—— A new thought occurred to me: 'She may be kept apart from the other captives?—in the [illegible] —she may be concealed in the copse until the sentence be pronounced?'

This last conjecture brought along with it hopes and resolves. I determined to search the copse. If I should find her there, my emprise would be easy indeed; at all events, easier than I had anticipated. Though guarded by the savages, I should rescue her from their grasp. The lives of six men—perhaps twice that number—were under my belt. The odds of unarmed numbers would be nothing against the deadly bullets from my revolvers, and I saw that many of the savages had laid aside their weapons, confiding in the security of their camp.

But I might find her alone, or perhaps with [illegible] single jailer. The meeting of the council favoured this supposition. The men would all be there—some to take part—others interested in the result, or merely from curiosity to watch the proceedings. Yes, all of them would have an interest in the issue—too surely all. The barbarous custom of these savage brutes at that moment came to my remembrance! I stayed no longer to reflect; but gliding into the grove, commenced my search for the captive.

The ground was favourable to my progress: there was not much underwood, and the trees grew thinly; I could easily pass amongst them without the necessity of crouching, and without making noise. The soft tread of the moccasin was in my favour, as also the dark shadowy foliage that stretched overhead, hiding the sky from my view.

The chief timber of the copse was the pecan hickory —almost an evergreen—and the trees were still in full leaf; only here and there, where the trunks stood far apart, did the moonbeams strike through the thick frondage. The surface of the ground was shrouded from her light, and the narrow aisles through which I passed were as dark as if no moon had been shining.

There was still light enough to reveal some horrid scenes. O Heaven! my heart bleeds at the remembrance.

I was wrong in my conjecture. The men had not all gone to the council; the captive women were not all by the camp-fires. I beheld ruffian men beside their helpless victims—women—fair white women—with drooping heads and listless air—dishevelled—weeping! O Heaven! my heart recoils at the remembrance!

It recoiled at the sight—it burned with indignation. At every turn did it prompt me to draw knife or pistol; at every step my fingers itched to immolate a hideous paint-besmeared brute—to slay a 'noble' savage.

I was restrained only by my own desperate situation—by my apprehensions for the safety of Isolina, now more acute than ever. What horrid imaginings crowded into my brain, begot by the barbarous drama that was being enacted around me.

The monsters, too earnestly occupied with their captives, took no heed of me; and I passed on without interruption.

I threaded the pathways of the grove one after another, gliding through as rapidly as the path would permit; I entered every aisle and glade; I searched everywhere, even to the furthest limits of the wood. I saw more men—more weeping women—more ruffianism; I saw nought of her for whom I searched.

'In the tent then—she must be there.'

I turned my face towards the lodge, and moving with stealthy step, soon arrived among the trees that stood in the rear. I halted near the edge, and separating the leaves with my hands, peered cautiously through. I had no need to search further—Isolina was before my eyes.

CHAPTER XCIV.

THE COUNCIL.

Yes, there was my betrothed—within sight, within hearing, almost within reach of my hands; and I dared not touch, I dared not speak, I scarcely dared look upon her. My fingers trembled among the leaves—my heart rose and fell—I could feel within my breast its strokes, rapid and irregular—I could hear its sonorous vibration.

It was not at the first glance that I saw Isolina. On looking through the leaves, the *coup d'œil* was a scene that quite astonished me, and for a while occupied my attention. Since I had last gazed upon the great fire, the grouping around it had undergone an entire change; a new tableau was presented, that for the moment held me under a spell of surprise.

The fire no longer blazed, or only slightly, and when stirred; the logs had burned into coals, and now yielded a fainter light, but one more red and garish. It was steady, nevertheless, and the vastness of the pile rendered it strong enough to illumine the camp-ground to its utmost limits.

The fire was still encircled by savages, but no longer standing, nor grouped irregularly, as I had before observed them; on the contrary, they were seated, or rather squatted at equal distances from each other, and forming a ring that girdled the huge mound of embers.

There were about twenty of these men—I did not count them—but I observed that all were in their native costume—leggings, and breech-cloth to the waist—nothing above, save the armlets and shell-ornaments of nose, ears, and neck. All were profusely painted with chalk, ochre, and vermilion. Beyond doubt, I was looking upon the 'council.'

The other Indians—they in 'fancy dresses'—were still upon the ground, but they stood behind, retired a pace or two from the circle, and in groups of two, three, or four, talking in low mutterings. Others were moving about, still at a greater distance from the fire.

My observation of all these features of the scene did not occupy ten seconds of time—just so long as my eyes were getting accustomed to the light. At the end of that interval, my glance rested upon Isolina, and there became fixed. My fingers trembled among the leaves; my heart rose and fell; I could feel within my breast its strokes, rapid and irregular; I could hear its sonorous vibration.

In the chain of Indians that encircled the fire, there was a break—an interval of ten or a dozen feet. It was directly in front of the lodge, and *above* the fire; for the ground gently sloped from the tent towards the stream. In this spot the captive was seated. Her situation was exactly between the lodge and the fire, and a little retired behind the circle of the council. The tent intervening between her and my position, had prevented me from seeing her at first.

She was half seated, half reclining upon a robe of wolf-skins. I saw that her arms were free; I saw that her limbs were bound. Her back was to the tent, her face turned towards the council. I could not see it.

To recognise my betrothed, I did not need to look upon her face; her matchless form, outlined against the red embers, was easily identified. The full round curve of the neck—the oval lines of the head—the majestic sweep of the shoulders—the arms smooth and symmetrical—all these were familiar to my eyes, for oft had they dwelt on them in admiration. I could not be mistaken; the form before me was that graven upon my heart—it was Isolina's.

There was another salient point in this singular tableau, that could not escape observation. Beyond the fire, and directly opposite to where Isolina was placed, I saw another well-known object—the white steed! He was not staked there, but haltered and held in hand by one of the Indians. He must have been lately brought upon the ground, for from neither of my former points of observation had I noticed him. He, like his mistress, was to be put on trial—his ownership was also matter of dispute.

There was in sight one more object that interested me—not with friendly interest did I regard it—but with disgust and indignation. Not seated in the council ring, not standing among the idle groups, but apart from all, I beheld Hissoo-royo the renegade. Savage as were the red warriors, fiend-like as they appeared with their paint-smeared visages, not one looked so savage or fiend-like as he.

The features of this man were naturally bad; but the paint—for he had adopted this with every other vile custom of barbarian life—rendered their expression positively ferocious. The device upon his forehead was a death's-head and cross-bones, done in white chalk, and upon his breast appeared the well imitated semblance of a bleeding scalp—the appropriate symbols of a cruel disposition.

There was something unnatural in a white skin thus disfigured; for the native complexion was not hidden: here and there it could be perceived forming the ground of the motley elaboration—its pallid hue in strange contrast with the deeper colours that daubed it. It was not the canvas for such a picture.

Yet there the picture was—in red and yellow, black, white, and blue; there stood the deep-dyed villain.

I saw not his rival; I looked for him, but saw him not. Perhaps he was one of those who stood around?—perhaps he had not yet come up? He was the son of the head-chief—perhaps he was inside the lodge? The last was the most probable conjecture.

The great calumet was brought forward and lit by the fire; it was passed around the circle, from mouth to mouth, each savage satisfying himself with a single draw from its tube. I knew that this was the inauguration of the council. The trial was about to proceed.

CHAPTER XCV.

MEASURING THE CHANCES.

The situation in which I was placed by chance, could not have been better had I deliberately chosen it. I had under my eyes the council fire and council, the groups around—in short, the whole area of the camp.

What was of equal importance, I could see without being seen. Along the edge of the copse there extended a narrow belt of shadow, similar to that which had favoured me while in the channel, and produced by a like cause—for the stream and the selvedge of the grove were parallel to each other. The moonbeams fell obliquely upon the grove, and under the thick foliage of the pecans I was well screened from her light behind, while the lodge covered me from the glare of the fire in front.

I could not have been better placed for my purpose. I saw the advantage of the position, and resolved therefore to abide in it.

The observations and reflections thus given in detail occupied me but a few minutes of time. Thought is quick, and at that crisis mine was more than usually on the alert. Almost instantaneously did I perceive the points that most interested me, or had reference to my plans; almost instantaneously I had mastered the situation, and I next bent my mind upon the way to take advantage of it.

I saw there was but one way to proceed: my original scheme must be carried out. Under so many eyes, there was not the slightest chance that the captive could be stolen away; she must be taken openly, and by a bold stroke. Of this was I convinced.

The question arose, when should I make the attempt? At that moment? She was not ten paces from where I stood! Could I rush forward, and with my knife set free her limbs? Might we then get off before the savages could fling themselves upon us?

Hopeless—impossible. She was too near them; she was too near the renegade who claimed her as his property. He was standing almost over her, within distance of a single leap. In his belt was the long triangular blade, the Spanish knife. He could have cut me down ere I could have severed a cord of her fastenings. The attempt would fail; success was hopeless—impossible. I must wait for a better opportunity; and I waited.

I remembered Rube's last word of counsel, not to act too hastily—and his reasons, that if I must make a 'desprit strike for it,' to leave the grand *coup* to the last moment. The circumstances could be no worse then than now.

Under the influence of this idea, I checked my impatience, and waited.

I watched Hissoo-royo; I watched the squatted forms around the fire; I watched the straggling groups behind them. In turn, my eyes wandered from one to the other.

At intervals, too, they rested upon Isolina. Up to this moment I had not seen her countenance; I saw only the reverse of that beautiful image so deeply graven upon my heart. But even then—under that suspense of peril—strange thoughts were passing within me. I felt a singular longing to look upon her face; I remembered the *herredero*.

It pleased fortune to smile upon me. So many little incidents were occurring in my favour, that I began to believe the fates propitious, and my hopes of success were growing stronger apace. Just then the captive turned her head, and her face was towards me. There was no mark on that fair brow; that soft cheek was without a scar; the delicate skin was intact, smooth, and diaphanous as ever. The herredero had been merciful!

Perhaps something had occurred to interrupt or hinder him from his horrid work? Would that the matador had met with a similar interruption! I could not tell—those profuse clusters covered all—neck, bosom, and shoulders were hidden under the dark dishevelment. I could not tell, but I did not dare to hope. Cyprio had seen the blood!

It was but a momentary glance, and her face was again turned away. At intervals she repeated it, and I saw that she looked in other directions. I could note the uneasiness of her manner; I could tell why those glances were given; I knew her design. O for one word in her hearing—one whisper!

It might not be; she was too closely watched. Jealous eyes were upon her; savage hearts were gloating over her beauty. No word could have reached her that would not have been heard by others—by all around the fire—for the silence was profound. The 'council' had not yet essayed to speak.

The stillness was at length broken by the voice of a crier, who in a shrill tone proclaimed that the 'council was in session.'

There was something so ceremonious in the whole proceedings, and every movement was made with such regularity, that but for the open air, the fire, the wild savage costumes, and fierce painted faces, I might have fancied myself in the presence of a civilised court, and witnessing a trial by jury. It was in effect just such a trial, though judge there was none. The members of the jury were themselves the judges, for in the simplicity of such primitive litigation, each was presumed to understand the law without an interpreter.

Pleaders, too, were equally absent; each party—plaintiff and defendant—was expected to plead his own case. Such is the simple fashion in the high court of the prairies—a fashion which might elsewhere be adopted with advantage.

The name of 'Hissoo-royo' pealed loud upon the air. The crier was calling him into court—another parallel with the customs of civilisation.

Three times the name was pronounced—at each repetition in a shriller and louder tone than before.

The man might have spared his voice; he who was summoned was upon the spot, and ready to answer. Before the echo died away, the renegade uttered a brief response; and stepping to an open space within the ring, halted, drew himself up to his full height, folded his arms, and in this attitude stood waiting.

At that crisis the thought occurred to me, whether I should rush forward, and at once decide the fate of myself and my betrothed. The seated warriors appeared to be all unarmed; and the renegade—whose hand I most regarded—was now further off, having gone round to the opposite side of the fire. The situation was favourable, and for a moment I stood bending upon the spring.

But my eye fell upon the spectators in the background; many of them were directly in the way I should have to take; I saw that many of them carried weapons—either in their hands, or upon their persons—and that Hissoo-royo himself was still too near.

I could never fight my way against such odds. I could not break such a line—it would be madness to attempt it. Rube's counsel was again ringing in my ears; and once more I abandoned the rash design.

CHAPTER XCVI.

THE WHITE-HAIRED CHIEF.

There was an interval of silence—a dramatic pause—that lasted for more than a minute. It was ended by one of the council rising to his feet, and by a gesture inviting Hissoo-royo to speak.

The renegade began:

'Red warriors of the Hietan! brothers! what I have to say before the council will not require many words. I claim yonder Mexican girl as my captive, and therefore as my own. Who denies my right? I claim the white horse as mine—my prize fairly taken.'

The speaker paused, as if to wait for further commands from the council.

'Hissoo-royo has spoken his claim to the Mexican maiden and the white steed. He has not said upon what right he rests it. Let him declare his right in presence of the council!'

This was said by the same Indian who had made the gesture, and who appeared to direct the proceedings. He was not acting by any superior authority, which he may have possessed, but merely by reason of his being the oldest of the party. Among the Indians, age gives precedence.

'Brothers!' said Hissoo-royo, in obedience to the command—'my claim is just—of that you are to be the judges; I know your true hearts—you will not shut them against justice. I need not read to you your own law, that he who makes a captive has the right to keep it—to do with it as he will. This is the law of your tribe—of my tribe as well, for yours is mine.'

Grunts of approbation caused a momentary interruption in the speech.

'Hietans!' resumed the speaker, 'my skin is white, but my heart is the colour of your own. You did me the honour to adopt me into your nation; you honoured me by making me first a warrior, and afterwards a war-chief. Have I ever given you cause to regret what you have done? Have I ever betrayed your trust?'

A volley of exclamations indicated a response in the negative.

'I have confidence, then, in your love of justice and truth; I have no fear that the colour of my skin will blind your eyes, for you all know the colour of my heart.'

Fresh signs of approbation followed this adroit stroke.

'Then, brothers! listen to my cause: I claim the maiden and the horse. I need not tell where they were found, and how; your own eyes were witnesses of their capture. There has been talk of a doubt as to who made it, for many horsemen were in the pursuit. I deny that there is any doubt. My lazo was first over the head of the horse—was first tightened around his throat—first brought him to a stand. To take the horse was to take the rider. It was my deed; both are my captives. I claim both as my property. Who is he that disputes my claim? Let him stand forth!'

Having delivered this challenge with a defiant emphasis, the speaker fell back into his former attitude; and, once more folding his arms, remained silent and immobile.

Another pause followed, which was again terminated by a sign from the old warrior who had first spoken. This gesture was directed to the crier, who the moment after, raising his loud, shrill voice, called out:

'*Wakono!*'

The name caused me to start as if struck by an arrow. It was my own appellation: I was Wakono!

It was pronounced thrice, each time louder than the preceding:

'Wakono! Wakono! Wakono!'

A light flashed upon me. Wakono was the rival claimant! He whose breech-cloth was around my hips, whose robe hung from my shoulders, whose plumed bonnet adorned my head, whose pigments disfigured my face—he of the red hand upon his breast, and the cross upon his brow, was no other than Wakono!

I cannot describe the singular sensation I felt at this discovery. I was in a perilous position indeed. My fingers trembled among the leaves. I released the branchlets, and let them close up before my face; I dared not trust myself to look forth.

For some moments I stood still and silent, but not without trembling. I could not steady my nerves under such a dread agitation.

I listened, but looked not. There was an interval of breathless silence—no one seemed to stir or speak—they were waiting the effect of the summons.

Once more the voice of the crier was heard pronouncing in triple repetition: 'Wakono! Wakono! Wakono!'

Again followed an interval of silence; but I could hear low mutterings of surprise and disappointment as soon as it was perceived that the Indian did not answer to his name.

I alone knew the reason of his absence; I knew that Wakono could not—the true Wakono—that his counterfeit would not come.

Though I had undertaken to personate the savage chieftain, for this act in the drama I was not prepared. The stage must wait.

Even at that moment I was sensible of the ludicrousness of the situation; so extreme was it, that even at that moment of direst peril, I felt a half inclination for laughter! But the feeling was easily checked; and once more parting the branches, I ventured to look forth.

I saw there was some confusion. Wakono had been reported 'missing.' The members of the council still preserved both their seats and stoical composure; but the younger warriors behind were uttering harsh ejaculations, and moving about from place to place with that restless air that betokens at once surprise and disappointment.

At this crisis, an Indian was seen emerging from the tent. He was a man of somewhat venerable aspect, though venerable more from age than any positive expression of virtue. His cheeks were furrowed by time, and his hair white as bleached flax—a rare sight among Indians.

There was something about this individual that bespoke him a person of authority. Wakono was the son of the chief—the chief, then, should be an old man. This must be he?

I had no doubt of it, and my conjecture proved to be correct.

The white-haired Indian stepped forward to the edge of the ring, and with a wave of his hand commanded silence.

He was instantly obeyed. The murmurings ceased, and all placed themselves in fixed attitudes to listen.

THE POSTMAN'S KNOCK.

The postman's knock is more audible than ever in London:

No. 17 does an acknowledgment get,
And 18 a letter of love;

and—what is still further a matter of interest to us—it is heard at an earlier hour than ever in the morning. Mr Briggs, a year or two ago, was daily obliged to bustle off from Prospect Villas to the City without waiting for the general postman, whose visits were tormentingly delayed beyond the hour when Briggs could conscientiously remain in the bosom of his family; but now, before the breakfast is well ended, up comes the postman, with a letter to state that Aunt Jane will arrive on a visit that very day, and will reach Euston Square by six o'clock—which will just enable Briggs to call for her on his way home from office: whereupon he blesses Rowland Hill, and departs cityward in a benevolent frame of mind. And here we are reminded that the postman's knock is, after all, not a necessary part of the arrangements; for if we would only observe fair-play towards the dignitaries of St Martin's le Grand, as a means of enabling them to observe fair-play towards us, we should provide letter-boxes in our doors: the postman's weary trudge would become marvellously shortened in time though not in distance; and every Briggs or Paterfamilias would be the better for it.

The new *postal district* reform goes on bravely: we have already gained *forty* minutes by it in the first morning delivery; and as time is money to a man so thoroughly commercial as John Bull, those minutes do really increase our national wealth. What the districts mean, is not yet clearly known to all; but the knowledge is gradually coming. There are monster maps of London staring at us in the shop-windows, belonging to Guides, and Handbooks, and newspaper supplements—maps

Too broad to be conceived
By any narrow mind,

as Hood might have said—maps in which N. and W., and E. C. and S. E., and other initials, are shewn as belonging each to a huge slice taken out of the metropolis. But before treating of these initials and districts, it may be well to shew how the wonderful postal system of the great city has grown up.

Our country post was originally carried by special messengers, by common carriers, or by relays of pack-horses, according to the circumstances of the times, or the energy of individuals: the letters from one part to another of the same town being easily managed by foot-messengers, each letter being the subject of a separate bargain or arrangement. The corporation records of Bristol contain an entry of one penny given to a carrier for conveying a letter to London. It was not until the time of Charles I. that a regular system was established for conveying letters between the capitals of the two kingdoms. In 1635, the king issued a proclamation, commanding 'his postmaster of England for foreign parts to settle a morning-post or two, to run night and day between Edinburgh and London, to go thither and come back again in six days, and to take with them all such letters as shall be directed to any post-town in or near that road;' and it was at the same time ordered that by-posts should be connected with many places on the main line, to bring and carry out the letters from and to other towns. The postage-rate was fixed at 2d. the single letter for any distance under 80 miles; 4d. up to 140 miles; 6d. for any greater distance in England; and 8d. to any place in Scotland. The mail-service was a source of perquisite to some of the courtiers; and to secure this privilege, private persons were forbidden to carry letters as a source of profit. This right was tested in 1649, when the common council of London set up a post in rivalry with that of the government; they were instantly proceeded against for breach of privilege, and compelled to abandon their plan.

The penny-post is not a modern invention; for it appears that in 1683, one Robert Murray established a penny-post for the conveyance of letters and small parcels about London and its suburbs; he assigned this to William Dockwra. The plan, however, was denounced by the ultra-Protestant party, as a contrivance of the Jesuits; and it was alleged that if the bags were examined, they would be found full of popish plots. Nevertheless, Dockwra worked his post for several years; till its profits excited the envy of the government, who seized it on the ground of its being an infringement of the rights of the crown, granting him a pension to compensate him for the loss. This was the commencement of the London district post, of which Dockwra was subsequently appointed comptroller. Throughout all the changes, political and civil, of a century and a half, this London post remained a separate department of the general Post-office until 1854. No limit appears to have been placed by Dockwra to the *weight* of a packet sent by his post, but its *value* was restricted to L.10. The comptroller brought himself into trouble in 1698. The officers and messengers under him declared, in a memorial to the Treasury, that 'he wilfully doth what in him lyes to lessen the revenue of the penny post-office, that he may farm it or get it into his own hands;' that 'he forbids the taking in any bandboxes (except very small), and all parcells above a pound, which, when they were taken, did bring in considerable advantage to the office, they being now at great charge sent by porters into the city, and by coaches and watermen into the country, which formerly went by penny-post messengers, much cheaper and more satisfactory;' and that 'he stops, under spetious pretences, most parcells that are taken in, which is great damage to tradesmen by loosing their customers, or spoiling their goods, and many times hazard the life of the patient when physic is sent by a doctor or an apothecary.' He was, moreover, charged with stopping parcels, which it was hinted he misappropriated; with opening letters, and taking from them bills, &c.; and with persecuting all the officers except his own creatures. These delinquencies, real or alleged, led to the removal of Dockwra from the office of comptroller. The next fact we find relating to London letters was an attempt made in 1708 by a Mr Povey to establish a halfpenny-post in opposition to the official penny-post; but this enterprise likewise was suppressed by law. It thus appears that the penny-post of those days comprised not only the delivery of letters within the limits of London, but that of parcels also, and was thus the prototype of the modern Parcels' Delivery Company.

The state of the London postal service in 17 about the middle of the reign of George II., is well represented in *A Tour through the whole Is of Great Britain*, of which a fourth edition was published in that year: the work being originally, as said—though we know not on what grounds— Defoe. 'The Post-office,' we are told, 'is kept Lombard Street, in a large house formerly Sir Robe Viner's, and is under admirable management. The penny-post is a branch of it, and a most useful addi to trade and business; for by it letters are delivere the remotest corners of the town almost as soon a they could be sent by a messenger, and that from fo five, six, to eight times a day, according as the distan of the place makes it practicable—insomuch that y may send a letter from Limehouse in the east, to t furthest part of Westminster for a penny, seven times in the same day, and to the neighbou villages, as Kensington, Hammersmith, Chiswi &c., westward; Newington, Islington, Kentish Tow Hampstead, Holloway, Highgate, &c., northwa Newington Butts, Camberwell, &c., southward; a Stepney, Poplar, Bow, Stratford, Deptford, Green &c., eastward—once a day. Nor are you tied up single piece of paper, as in the general post-office, b any packet under a pound-weight goes at the sa price.' If this account be correct, the cheap excelled that even of this present year, 1857, so f as London alone is concerned; for the boldness of postal reformers has not yet brought us to the stat which the postman's knock becomes the harbinger a pound-packet conveyed for a charge of one penny.

We do not here touch upon the large subject of t general post, with its mail-coaches and mail-packets, or upon Mr Palmer's invention, which converted th into rapid conveyance; or upon the state pensions through which the never-dying 'heirs of the Duk of Schomberg,' and the Dukes of Grafton a Marlborough, obtain large sums annually out of postal revenues; or upon the franking system, whe by 'Dr Crichton, carrying with him a cow and div other necessaries,' 'a deal-case with four flitches bacon,' 'a case of knives and forks,' 'fifteen couple hounds,' and 'two servant-maids going as laundress to my Lord Ambassador Methuen,' were in Que Anne's reign 'franked' to their several destinatio by virtue of parliamentary privileges—we touch none of these things, but confine attention to t London district-post.

During the great war with France, when taxes all kinds were high, the postal rates were increased. I 1801, the London penny-post became a twopenny-pos confined within rather narrow district limits, beyo which there was a zone of threepenny-post, a belonging to the London rather than to the gener system. It was about 1814 that the authorities beg to find the old house in Lombard Street too small f the increasing business; but with the slowness chara teristic of most official undertakings in this country it was not until 1829 that the vast structure in S Martin's le Grand was opened—certainly at that tim the largest and finest post-office in the world, a indeed we are not aware that it has since been equalled. Large as it is, however, it is full to overflowing; t Money-order Office has been driven to find a hom over the way; the central hall is nearly blocked u with most inartistic but probably convenient addi tional receiving and sorting rooms; and we may loo forward to a parliamentary demand for a new buildin by and by. The reader is of course aware that i 1830 the mails first began to be conveyed by railway and that the number of letters was increased by t facilities thus offered; that in 1835 the newspaper stamp was reduced to one penny, offering a temptatio to print, sell, buy, and post more newspapers th before; and that in 1840, after three years' indomita perseverance, Mr Rowland Hill succeeded in bringing into operation one of the greatest social improvements of our age—the general penny-postal system—inducing those to write letters who never wrote before, and those who had written, to double or quadruple their epistolary correspondence. These matters being borne in mind, it will be easy to understand how they have led to the partition of the metropolis into several distinct postal districts.

It must be remembered, not only that millions of letters are every year conveyed from one part to another of the metropolis itself, but that others arrive daily in London from the country, that a third group leave London daily for transmission into the country, and that a fourth simply pass through London *en route*, being neither posted nor delivered therein. Only by combining these four groups can we rightly appreciate the magnitude of the system. There are 11,000 post-offices or receiving-houses in the United Kingdom, from all of which letters may need to be transmitted to the metropolis, either for delivery there, or *en route* to other places; and as, conversely, London may need to send letters to all these 11,000 places, St Martin's le Grand has much to do besides attending to the merely London letters, and indeed, beyond all this, the entire foreign and colonial mails are managed in London. It is on these several accounts that the letters passing into or out of or through London daily so vastly exceed in number those in any other city in the world. Great as has been the increase in all departments of our postal system, that of London eclipses all the others in rapidity of advance; for whereas the letters of the whole United Kingdom increased *sixfold* between 1840 and 1856, those of London increased *ninefold*. The letters in which London is concerned now amount to more than 200,000,000 annually; that is, in round numbers, 50,000,000 posted in London for delivery in London, 50,000,000 posted in the country for delivery in London, and 100,000,000 that leave London either direct or *in transitu* to places all over the world.

Now, fixing attention on 100,000,000 of these letters, those which are delivered in London comprising more than one-fifth of all the letters that pass into or through any or all parts of the United Kingdom (about 470,000,000 in 1856), we shall at once understand how important must be any improvement that will expedite the delivery of these letters. There are about 500 of the red-coated personages who give the postman's knock, each of whom delivers on an average, say 700 letters in an average day; the number of miles he walks in the performance of this duty is something wonderful; and no one but himself can truly tell how much his labours are increased by any ambiguity or blunder in the direction of the letters.

It was in the Second Report of the postmaster-general relating to the operations of 1855, that the public were first informed of a project concerning the subdivision of the metropolis into postal districts. A hint to this effect had been thrown out by the commissioners of Post-office inquiry in 1837, and again by the Commons' committee on the same subject in 1843; and in December 1854, Viscount Canning, at that time postmaster-general, appointed a committee of officers at St Martin's le Grand to investigate the matter. The project to be examined was this—how best to divide London into districts, with a separate sorting-office for each, and hourly deliveries during twelve hours in the day. It was shewn that the distribution of that large portion of London district-letters intended for delivery near the place of posting, and which amount to about one-fifth of the whole number of London district-letters daily collected, might be much accelerated in the outer parts of the metropolis by stopping those letters at a local sorting-office, instead of sending them to one central office for all London. It was also rendered evident that the delivery of the morning general-post might commence at an earlier hour. As a means of obtaining these and other useful results, the committee recommended—that the metropolis should be divided into ten postal districts, two central and eight suburban; that these should extend to a twelve-mile radius from Charing Cross; that each district should be treated as a distinct town in regard to postal matters; that each district-office, after collecting from the receiving-offices within its limits, should sort the letters, and send nine bags to the other nine districts—one to each; that it should deliver, by its own postmen, the letters directed to houses within its limits; that it should receive nine bags from the other nine districts—one from each—containing letters posted in those districts for the district in question; that those letters should be delivered by its own postmen; and that mail-carts should rapidly convey the bags from one district-office to another. The committee gave themselves the task of plotting out the proposed postal districts; they considered that the two central districts should include such an area, having the river Thames for a southern boundary, as would permit the letter-carriers to reach the points at which their deliveries would commence in about ten or fifteen minutes after leaving the district-office; and that the boundaries of those districts should, where practicable, be marked by the well-defined lines of main streets or roads; keeping together, however, the several parts of any locality which has a connected and peculiar character. The eight country-districts were, so far as possible, to be bounded by the then existing limits of the country-deliveries of the London district-post. A map, prepared by the committee, was printed in lithograph, and coloured, shewing the ten districts—named respectively Northern, North-eastern, North-western, Eastern, East Central, Western, West Central, Southern, South-eastern, and South-western—stretching from Waltham Cross, in the north, to Carshalton in the south, from Romford in the east, to Southall in the west.

It fell to the lot of the Duke of Argyle to carry out the plan commenced by his predecessor, the Viscount Canning. In the Second Report, above adverted to, published early in 1856, his grace points out how much time will be saved by obviating the necessity of sending merely local letters to St Martin's le Grand. 'Thus a letter from Cavendish Square to Grosvenor Square, instead of travelling four or five miles, as at present, could go almost directly from one place to another.' Under the former system, the first morning delivery was intrusted to about 480 postmen, who carried 480 bags to 480 'beats,' or small neighbourhoods; the letters were first sorted into districts, and then sub-sorted into beats by persons who alone possessed the minute local knowledge required for that purpose. Now the postmaster-general pointed out how the public might assist in expediting the postal service by putting a few initials on their letters, that would enable the *first* or district sorting to be effected before the letters reach London at all. Every railway traveller knows that mail-carriages, or post-office carriages, form part of every mail-train; these contain not only bags of letters, but clerks who are employed throughout the day in sorting. If a bag of letters, say, be sent from Edinburgh to London, that bag, under the old system, was conveyed unopened to St Martin's le Grand, where both the primary and the secondary sorting were effected; but under the improved plan suggested, the primary sorting would be done either at Edinburgh or in the railway train; insomuch that, on arriving at Euston station, the letters would be found separated into ten groups, packed in ten bags for ten districts. At half-past four o'clock in the morning, therefore, when the train arrives, half the sorting will have been completed, and the bags could be sent to the ten district-offices without going to St Martin's le Grand at all: this would insure, perhaps, one hour earlier delivery. The postmaster-general said: 'To secure so great an advantage, it is perhaps not unreasonable to hope that the public may be willing to give its ready co-operation. The whole plan of acceleration in the delivery of the general-post letters depends upon the first assortment being effected previously to the arrival of the mails. As London will, for postal purposes, be in effect divided into ten towns, it is essential to the complete working of the plan that the letters should be directed accordingly. For this purpose it would suffice, if to the address there were appended initial letters denoting the district, as N. for the northern, S. W. for the south-western, &c.; the public of course first receiving the necessary information, and all other aids being given. To enable provincial correspondents to act on this suggestion, little more would be necessary than for London residents to append the initial letters, as above, to their own. In many instances, the address thus given would be shorter than at present: thus "Hill Street, Berkeley Square," might be reduced to "Hill Street, W."'

During the year 1856, the Post-office authorities were busily engaged in preparations for this reform. The change itself became publicly known about the month of November; and it is highly gratifying to hear that the saving of time has already been very marked. In the Third Report of the postmaster-general, published in April of the present year, we find that *more than half* of the letters posted in the country for delivery in London undergo their first sorting before they reach London at all. What is the consequence? The delivery *begins* thirty-three minutes earlier than it did twelve months ago, and *ends* forty-six minutes earlier—giving an average of just about forty minutes' saving. And when letter-writers in the country habituate themselves still more to the use of the initial, a still further saving will be effected; for it must be remembered that although a London postman knows that 'Hill Street, Berkeley Square,' is in district W., that fact may not be known so readily by the sorters in the country or in the mail-train; the letter will reach safely, but it is not certain that the primary sorting can be done before the letter reaches London. But this is too favourable an example, for the names almost indicate that they *must* be in the western district; it is more to the purpose to ask whether a sorter in the country would know that 'William Street, New Bridge Street,' is in the East Central district, unless the initials E. C. were written on the letter? The postmaster-general further tells us, that about one-third of the local letters, directed from one part of London to another, have now the initials written on them. The saving of time, averaging forty minutes in London generally, amounts to one hour at many of the suburban villages. Considering that this great improvement has been wrought with very little addition to the public expenditure, the saving of time, on perhaps 150,000 letters a day, is a positive increase to the commercial wealth and the social comfort of the metropolis; and considering that all Londoners are more or less interested in the matter, the least they can do is to try to aid the postmaster-general in the matter.

The names of streets are a terrible trouble to the postmen, who, through their chief, are earnestly imploring the Metropolitan Board of Works to effect a reform in this direction. If a letter be addressed to John Street, London, correct in all other particulars, but not denoting *which* John Street, who can tell the amount of perplexity produced? *There are sixty John Streets in London!* And then the King Streets and Queen Streets, the New Streets and William Streets—each group varies from forty to sixty in number. In the Third Report, the postmaster-general makes especial mention of the Westbourne series as a very embarrassing one; for not only is that name combined with the usual street, terrace, &c.; but there are six varieties of what may be called ternary compounds, in which the first two names are Westbourne Park, and the third is cottage, crescent, place, road, terrace, or villa. The slightest blunder in the direction here might give the poor postman half a mile of additional walking; and is it to be expected that a country letter-writer should be always keen enough to observe the nice distinctions between 'Westbourne Park Cottages' and 'Westbourne Park Villas?' It is not every cottage that knows itself from a villa, although the villa sometimes looks disdainfully at a cottage. Mr Cork, inspector of letter-carriers, reported on some of the anomalies in the numbering of houses, irrespective of those in the naming of streets. During his inspections he found the four corners of a new and unfinished street all called No. 1; he found a street built by seven persons, each of whom gave a favourite name to his own group, with No. 1 to begin each group, and thus there were seven No. 1's in the same street; and he found No. 95 between Nos. 14 and 16 in a particular street—an arrangement so extraordinary, that he was induced to inquire into its cause. 'A woman came to the door, when I requested to be informed why a brass number 95 should appear between 14 and 16: she said it was the number of a house she formerly lived at in another street, and it (meaning the brass-plate) being a very good one, she thought it would do for her present residence as well as any other!'

Thus the postman's difficulties are not a few; and so far as we can alleviate them, it is nothing more than just so to do.

THE GARLAND OF WILD-FLOWERS

These be simple flowers, lady,
That I have culled for you;
For in no lordly garden
Or gay parterre they grew;
But on the dewy field-bank,
Where the poorest child may roam,
And fill its lap with treasures,
To bear exulting home.

Any little country maiden
Can call you these by name;
I cannot bring you rarer,
Since no foot of ground I claim;
But wide and rich is the domain
I share with millions more:
Old England's meads and cornfields
The gardens of her poor.

For while man sows 'the staff of life,'
Unseen, a higher hand
Is strewing gems of beauty
To gladden all the land.
The farmer calls them worthless weeds;
But *He* sends sun and rain,
Till many-hued they blossom
Amongst the golden grain.

So do not scorn them, lady,
These humble, God-sown flowers—
Oh! they were lovely *once* to you
In childhood's guileless hours—
So rather humbly join in praise
To *Him* who thus has given,
To rich and poor alike, a boon
Of beauty straight from Heaven.

RUTH BUCK.

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THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH.

THE American *Niagara*—do not be alarmed, gentle reader, we mean the frigate, not the fall—arrived recently in England to receive her share of a very interesting burden—the metallic cable which is about to be laid across the depths of the Atlantic, in order that one of the vast gulfs of the earth may be commercially annihilated. The English *Agamemnon*, of Sebastopol fame, had long been waiting at Portsmouth for the other half of the load. About the 18th of July, these mighty war-ships will trim their screws, and start for the mid-Atlantic, in generous rivalry to try which can first waft thence to its own native shore the end of the bond thenceforth to annex the New World to the Old. The two halves of the cable will be firmly spliced together in mid-ocean, and each vessel will then steam its own way; the one towards the west, and the other towards the east, paying out the metallic rope from its stern. It is anticipated that the cable will be safely deposited in its deep resting-place, in the course of eight or ten days at most.

The cable consists of a strand of seven copper wires, firmly twisted together, and enclosed first within a thick coating of gutta-percha, to insulate it from all conducting influences; and then in a layer of rope-yarn, saturated with a compound of tar and oil. The copper core, gutta-percha sheath, and hempen great-coat, are next all enveloped together in an investment of iron wire, bound closely round them to furnish tenacity and strength. In this outer investment, there are eighteen strands, each consisting of seven iron wires. The wires are twisted together to form the strand, and the strands are twisted round yarn and gutta-percha, to form the rope. The copper strand and the iron strands are each one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter; and the rope itself is about eleven-sixteenths of an inch thick. Notwithstanding its containing so much metal in its composition, this ingeniously constructed cable is so flexible that it can be coiled about with the utmost facility.

The contractors who have undertaken the labour of preparing this gigantic cable, have engaged to have 2800 miles of it completed and ready for embarkation by the middle of July. The labour is equally divided between the Messrs Newall of Birkenhead, and the Messrs Glass and Elliott of East Greenwich. Through the instrumentality of steam, each of these firms turns out seventy miles of the rope per day, at a cost of about L.100 per mile. Nearly all the wire-drawers of England are taxed to the utmost to keep up the necessary supply of the metallic portion of the raw material. In the neighbourhood of the works, light wagons, drawn each by four horses, are continually to be seen hurrying backwards and forwards at high speed with huge drums of the twisted wire, the driver plying his whip, and turning the corners with an air that reminds one of the red-coated man of high dignity who was encountered everywhere, and stopped nowhere, before Her Majesty's mail-bags went upon the rail.

The telegraphically important portion of the cable is that small strand of copper wire which lies within the thick gutta-percha tube. Slight, indeed, does that sixteenth-of-an-inch strand look for the work to which it is destined—the conveyance to and fro of a world's messages through nearly 2000 miles of distance, lying chiefly at the bottom of a deep sea. One of the most wonderful and interesting features of the novel enterprise, in fact, is the boldness with which the idea has been conceived of carrying out an object so stupendous by an instrumentality so small. To the eye, the rope seems fitted to connect the posts of a laundress's drying-ground, rather than the eastern and western continents of the wide world. No one who has stood in the yard of the factory at Greenwich, and seen the tar-blackened men coiling that slim rope round in the pits of the yard, as it is delivered by rollers through the wall from the machinery, can wonder that many, among even electrically and mechanically initiated men, have questioned the possibility of its ever efficiently performing the office for which it has been designed. The indefatigable and sagacious electrician of the company, Mr Whitehouse, has, however, a large series of very ponderous facts ready for the conversion of such sceptics, when they trust themselves within reach of his experimental demonstration.

It is well worth while, merely as an act of passing curiosity, for any one who can procure the *entrée* of the somewhat closely guarded cable-treasury, to take a glance at that lightning-king, Mr Whitehouse, in his cabinet. In a small chamber, looking out over the pits where many hundred miles of the cable are coiled in flat layers, he may be daily found, surrounded by the ingenious and complex implements which are the insignia of his rule. In one nook of the instrumental repertory there is an exquisitely delicate balance, very much like a steelyard—with that the cunning manipulator *weighs* the force of his electrical currents. He makes the voltaic stream run along a wire coiled round a bar of soft iron, which then becomes a magnet, and attracts the iron-shod short end of the steelyard with a power that is measured by the number of grains lifted up at the opposite end. That balance has been christened by Mr Whitehouse his *magneto-electrometer*. It is obviously a pet child; and, indeed, it is deserving of its position in his affections; for a more beautiful practical application of a fundamental principle of science has never been devised by that inscrutable agent, the brain of inventive man. It is only necessary to see the old measure of electric force, the galvanometer, and this invention of Mr Whitehouse at work side by side, for the infinite superiority of the latter over the former to be apprehended. The needle of the galvanometer, when an electrical current is brought to it for examination, all at once starts madly off with a series of somersets, whirling over and over, and jerking its magnetised ends this way and that; and it is well if, after two or three minutes of such aberrant and hysterical demeanour, it settles quietly down into a deflection that philosophy can make head or tail of. The magneto-electrometer, under the same circumstances, tilts up a given number of grains on the end of the steelyard in a steady matter-of-fact business way, and then refuses to lift an additional one, and sends in the refusal as its estimation of the limit of the electric force. Mr Whitehouse would have earned a reputation in mechanical estimation, if he had done nothing else besides superseding the old crazy and fitful galvanometer, in matters where precise investigations into the behaviour of considerable degrees of electrical force are required.

Mr Whitehouse has also in his cabinet another no less ingenious implement for doing, with regard to the *velocity* of electrical currents, what the magneto-electrometer does with regard to their *force*. There is a long ribbon of paper in process of being unrolled from a drum by clock-work, and the ribbon of paper is saturated with a colourless substance, which receives a deep purple stain whenever a stream of electrical influence is caused to pass through it. There are two metal styles pressed down upon the paper—a metal plate lying beneath—and a seconds' pendulum swaying to and fro, turns on and off an electrical stream to the styles. In this way, as the paper is drawn from the drum, two parallel traces, *a second long*, are left on its surface, with blank seconds' intervals lying between them. But one style can be placed in connection with the beginning of a long wire, while the other communicates with its end, and so one trace lags back behind its companion just so long as the electrical current takes to flow through the stretch of the wire. In reality, the printing is performed by two relay-batteries, one for each style, which are called into operation by the primary current as it passes through a coil, wound on a bar of soft iron, and converts it into a magnet. When the bar becomes a magnet, it opens the flood-gates of the relay-batteries, so to speak, and makes them print. This, however, makes no difference in the practical result indicated by the arrangement: the journeymen relay-batteries print *on the instant* when the primary current there passing directs them to do so.

As Mr Whitehouse stands reflectingly in his cabinet, looking at the creations of his own sagacious brain and ingenious hands, he has a cobweb of wires enveloping him, until he seems almost like some astute old spider, with its feelers out in all directions, patiently waiting for the earliest intimation of the approach of a stray visitor and victim to his net. There are wires through the ceiling, and wires through the wall, and wires through the floor; wires on this hand, and wires on that. Take heed to your steps as you venture into this suspicious-looking retreat, or you will be tripped up by a strand extended under your feet. Take care of your head, or you will be suspended by a stretcher that comes from the window to a pair of vicious-looking magnetic coils, before you know what you are doing. Look to your coat-tails, or they will be pinned and impaled as you turn round. The meaning of all this wire-drawn complexity and confusion is, that the hundreds of miles of cable coiled up in the yard have sympathetic relations' with the instruments of this magical room, and can be acted upon by them in any conceivable way, either in lengths of half-a-dozen inches, or of a thousand miles. Mr Whitehouse has only to put now this wire and that into connection, and now to change this copper point from the binding-screw to the right, so that it shall rest in the grasp of that on the left, and he is able to ask all sorts of curious and prying questions of the raw material he has to deal with; and it is very rarely indeed that he asks a question without eliciting a reply.

Among the deeply interesting replies Mr Whitehouse has thus extracted from the Atlantic Telegraph cable while it has been in the process of construction, there are two or three which deserve to be known as widely and generally as the cable itself is long. That insulated core, when it is stretched across the Atlantic, will transmit its electrical messages, not as a simple conducting-wire, such as those are which are suspended for telegraphic purposes in the air, but by accumulated charge and subsequent discharge. The cable will be a capacious Leyden jar, Atlantic-breadth long, the gutta-percha sheath being its insulating layer, the copper strand its interior conducting coat, and the iron covering and the water of the sea, its outer coat. Every time a signal is sent through it, the entire jar must be filled with electricity, and discharged. It is well, then, that the copper strand in the middle is a small one. If it were a large one as well as a long one, it would need a proportionally enormous expenditure of electricity to make it perform its work. Mr Whitehouse demonstrates the fact of this being the actual electrical nature of the structure, by turning up into the air, and so insulating, the further ends of two pieces of the cable, one being 15 miles, and the other 200 miles long. The 15 mile length is then charged and *by its discharge* it lifts 1075 grains on the magneto-electrometer, as the discharge magnetises the iron bar. The same thing being done with the 200 mile length, the discharge lifts 2300 grains. The longer piece of cable receives and holds more electricity than the short one; and the larger quantity makes itself manifest by the exertion of greater power, when it is changed from the static into the moving state.

But how much electricity does it really take to charge hundred miles' lengths of wire? If the Atlantic cable is to be thousands of miles long, allowing for its curvatures, will it need thousands of pairs of voltaic plates to render it telegraphically available and active? It would, if you made it large as well as long; but it will not as it is made, with its slender core of twisted copper strand. Mr Whitehouse takes seven small triangular fragments of zinc, coats them with sealing-wax, and then chips off by a knife, from one of the points of each, the sealing-wax to an extent about as large as the letter 'o' in the print of this page; copper-wires being attached to the plates, and these being then immersed in seven small glass cells, charged with a diluted acid, the whole becomes a lilliputian voltaic battery, with the seven minute zinc-points for its acting part. With this lilliput battery, the writer of this article printed clearly defined and distinct telegraphic marks upon the ordinary ribbon of chemically prepared paper, *through* 660 *miles of the cable;* the length of time occupied by the passage of this feeble current through the 660 miles of the cable being no more than nine-tenths of a second. This curious piece of printing is retained in the writer's possession, that he may have a friendly monitor near at hand to fall back upon, whenever he feels himself inclining *to say of anything*, 'That cannot be.' Henceforth, he intends to wear that cabalistic fragment of paper as his *anti-sceptic* charm.

A simple voltaic current, sent forth from 72 pair of plates of 16 square inches each, lifts 25,000 grains on the magneto-electrometer, when thrown upon its magnetising coil at once. It lifts 10,650 grains when sent to the magneto-electrometer through 200 miles of cable; 3250, when sent through 400 miles; and 1400 grains when sent through 600 miles. It will be seen from this ratio that there is nothing to fear in the mere breadth of the Atlantic—speaking in an electro-telegraphic sense—when it is borne in mind, at the same time, that the lilliputian battery of seven points prints through 660 miles of cable; and when it is also understood that the enfeebled current, on arriving at the other side of the ocean, will be set, not to do hard mechanical labour, but simply to call relay-batteries into operation which will work the prickers of Professor Morse's apparatus as the ribbon of paper is drawn beneath them. The primary current will be passed round a soft iron bar a sufficient number of times to be again multiplied into strength; thus intensified, it will make a temporary magnet of the iron bar, and the magnet, *pro tem.*, will pull down the armature, and set the recording prickers to their labour.

Seventy-two pair of 16 inch voltaic plates—that is, zinc plates made electrically active by the chemical influence of acids—can raise 1400 grains at the distance of 600 miles. It effects this task with a loss of half a second for the time consumed on the journey. Ten plates of 100 square inches acting through the magnetisation of iron bars and the secondary currents called up in coiled wires by the magnetism, send forth a stream of influence which can only lift 745 grains at the distance of 600 miles; but this stream loses only nineteen-hundredths of a second. Simple voltaic electricity has *less motor force* than the electricity of magnetic induction; but the weak electricity of magnetic induction, strange to say, moves through the insulated and wire-bound cable *with a higher rate of speed* than the strong electricity of a voltaic character. As the messages of two mighty nations will have, for some time at least, to be transmitted through a single cable, it is a matter of no small importance that the most nimble messenger should be selected to do the work—that Ariel rather than Caliban should be sent upon the service. It will make a difference of some hundred pounds per week in the revenue of the company, whether two or six words per second can be transmitted through the telegraphic cable; hence, magnetic induction coils will be used in working the Atlantic Telegraph in preference to the simple voltaic battery. Here, again, there is a proof of the practical wisdom which has selected a small cable at a cost of L.100, and with a weight of less than one ton per mile, rather than a larger, heavier, and more costly structure depending upon its transmitting core for its strength. With such an implement of transmission, the weak, but humble induction coils could not have been employed. Several pair of induction coils, five feet long, but generating a current of very limited intensity, will be excited by large voltaic cells, containing plates of 2000 square inches. It is anticipated that the cost of working these batteries in the service of transatlantic telegraphy, will not exceed a shilling per hour.

But suppose that this slim cable should be stretched by its own weight, when six miles of it hangs looped down in the mid-Atlantic, its curve not yet sounding the depth of the ocean—what will happen then? If the already fine, and unquestionably soft and ductile core should be drawn out still finer by the strain, will it cease to be available as a means of telegraphic communication through so wide a span? will it no longer be able to transmit electricity enough to excite the operating magnet on the further shore of the broad ocean? As an answer to this question, Mr Whitehouse takes 600 miles of the cable, and finds that, through these, 745 grains are lifted on the magneto-electrometer by 72 pair of plates; and he then inserts *a whole mile of wire eleven times as small* as the copper core, midway of the cable, and through the entire length, cable and interpolated wire, 725 grains are lifted by the same 72 pair of plates. *The drawing out of an entire mile of the copper core to the amount of ten-elevenths of its entire thickness, only impairs its conducting capacity a thirty-seventh part.* It has been asserted that the copper core of the Atlantic cable will be drawn out *two feet in a mile*, and that this will destroy its transmitting power, so far as telegraph purposes are concerned. Mr Whitehouse replies by shewing, that if it were drawn out 96 *feet in every mile*, its loss of transmitting capacity would scarcely be remarked.

The external sheath of the cable is formed of twisted wires of iron, but those wires look to the eye absurdly fine for the task which is marked out for them; it seems as if a very few months' immersion in water would necessarily corrode them altogether away. If this corrosion should take place, what is to become of the denuded cable? The protecting investment being gone, what chance would the soft core within have of a prolonged existence of usefulness? Mr Bright, the engineer of the work, and the worthy coadjutor of Mr Whitehouse, has a very satisfactory answer for this question. The iron greatcoat of the cable may dissolve into rust, if it pleases, the very day after its strands have once been fairly deposited in the depths of the ocean; it is only designed to protect the more important portion of the cable during the process of laying down, and while it is exposed to accident from mechanical injury. When once this has reached its final resting-place, it will no longer require defence of any kind, because it will then be in the one situation of all others in the earth where it is the more fully withdrawn from every chance of hurtful interference. In the profound recesses of the Atlantic, there is no violence, and scarcely any motion; waves are but surface-ripples on the great oceanic reservoir; currents extend downwards only a few fathoms; anchors never obtrude themselves into these deep-sea realms, unless they fall to rise no more. The Atlantic cable will have the softest conceivable environments, for nothing can be more tranquil and calm than still water. Where the cable passes through a more accessible region, near to each shore of the ocean, it will be made of much larger dimensions, and of considerably greater strength.

There is one influence, however, which *may* reach the Atlantic cable, even in its retired bed, and affect it in a manner not at all desired by its projectors; here, indeed, is the real rub: great natural currents of electricity, coursing along within the earth's shell, may sympathetically disturb the insulated core, and occasionally preoccupy it with an induced charge, when it is required to be free and open to the performance of its ordinary business. If this should chance, it will be a troublesome matter, but not one by any means which science will not be able to meet. Antagonistic and neutralising currents will have to be furnished by art, to restore the equanimity of the central conductor, and to render it amenable to the will of the signaling-officers. The men who have conceived this noble work, so bold and grand from its very slightness and simplicity, will be fully equal to any emergency of this kind which may arise.

A CATASTROPHE.

In social experiences, every one has had his catastrophes, some grave and painful to recur to, and sore to touch, even when the wound has apparently healed; others harmless in issue, and amusing to look back upon when they have passed away. Of the latter class, though very grievous at the time, was the occasion when, after a ball at a ladies' school in the country, to which I had accompanied the brother of my hostess, we were discussing over our bedroom fire, with agreeable freedom, the merits, personal and pecuniary, of our respective partners, a half-dressed servant handed in a scrap of paper conveying an intimation from the lady-superior that the girls in the next room—as well of course as herself, which we probably considered even more serious—could hear every word we said. Of such also was the hour when, having invited two friends whom I had encountered in Paris on their wedding-tour, to dine with me at Durand's, I walked up the Rue Lafitte on the morning of the day of festivity with no better means of exercising that hospitality than a five-franc piece, and an intimation from the English office at Rothschild's, that no communications being received by them from London on a Monday, the little remittance of which I had received advice, and which was to be the foundation of my feast, could not arrive until the day after it. But the most exquisite catastrophe with which my experience supplies me, arose out of a circumstance of a far graver character, if possible, than either of these; and which, laying my personal feelings wholly aside, I hereby put on record for the benefit and warning of the unwary.

'Fred, old boy, will you do me a favour?'

The applicant, 'Harry Spooner, St Benet's College,' Oxford, was a youthful swell with whiskers pendent as the nest of a tropical bird, and nether garments like pudding-bags, who honours me with his friendship and occasional patronage in Piccadilly; and in whose composition the bump of veneration, that fossil organ nowadays, was not more largely developed than is usual with his contemporaries.

'You're going to the Shaftons on the 27th, are you not?'

'I rather thought of doing so. Was he?'

'Not asked, old boy; that's the rub—and that's what I wanted to speak to you about. Look here! You know how deucedly attached I am to Laura Heaviland!'

Devotedly would have been the expression, I thought, in the days when I adored—not that it is so long ago either—but sentiment has yielded to slang since then. Suppressing these views, however, which it would have been profitless to promulgate, I confined myself to a deprecatory acquiescence, for my friend had mentioned the circumstance before, more than once indeed, and with considerable details.

'Well, sir, the 27th is her birthday, don't you know? and I want to send her some verses—poetry, you know—that sort of thing. Charley Giltspur and I cobbled 'em up yesterday at the Wellington. I stood him a little dinner, and we did 'em up in the smoking-room. We had two "eye-openers," a "smash," and two "gin cocktails," and did 'em afterwards. I don't think they're out and out bad either. Well, sir, look here: the Heavilands will be safe to be in Harrington Street on the 27th, for they're intimate there, and here am I "scratched." Now, I want you, like a good fellow, to take charge of my little venture for me.'

'Me! Why on earth don't you send your verses by post? They're not too heavy, I hope?'

'Don't chaff, Fred, please. No, sir, they are not too heavy! It isn't that; but, if you understood these things, your own tact, sir, would suggest to you that verses are not things to be sent by post.'

'Ah! I see—clause in the Post-office regulations which forbids the transmission through that medium of inflammable substances. Well, then, why don't you leave 'em yourself?'

'Yes, with a ticket, I suppose, and would be glad to know how the family are! It won't do, Fred, as you ought to know. Women are very fond of little attentions of this sort; whether they like you, mind you, or not, they like *them*. But they don't care twopence, sir, about a thing if they get it in a plain straightforward way. You must be up to all sorts of dodges with them, bless you.'

'Oh! that's the way, is it?' I rejoined, very favourably impressed with the knowledge of female character exhibited by Mr Spooner, who had scarcely attained his fourth lustrum.

'That's it, my boy! That's why I want you to take it in hand. I never saw such a fellow, by Jove, as you are, when you do really take anything in hand. I want you to insinuate my notelet into her bouquet, pin it on to her *bournouse*, wrap it up with a present, or some gentle dodge of that sort. Bless you! it would be the making of me. They've six thousand apiece under the mother's settlement, and no brothers.'

'No brothers?'

'Yes! No brothers to be settled over and over again in life, and have their debts paid out of the daughters' fortunes. I always say to fellows: "Don't you have anything to say to any girls where there are brothers in the family; there's always sure to be a screw loose somewhere in the settlements, when the time comes to cash up." Bless you, sir, I've seen it dozens of times.'

Here my friend began to wander, a proceeding to which extensive experience of life apparently, and somewhat erratic mind, occasionally induced him; but in which it is not necessary for us to follow him.

I have no partiality myself for the part of confidant in a love-affair, having, in my limited experiences, been present at the birth and in at the death of so many, as to have had my sense of the novelty and interest of the situations considerably impaired. How it was that my usual caution and reserve deserted me on the present occasion, I cannot tell. Whether the compliment to my diplomatic talents—for we are but mortals—had softened the natural ruggedness of my disposition; or whether, like the vicar of Wakefield, I was tired of being wise; or whether a glass of *parfait amour* with my coffee, for my friend had timed his request with great judgment, had rendered me more susceptible to the gentle passion, or more enterprising generally, I scarcely know. Certain it is that, after some objecting, I consented to play Mercury, 'for that night only, by particular request.'

The important evening duly arrived, and the important missive with it. The billet was done up with great art, and smelt copiously of perfume. About its contents I did not trouble myself, satisfied that Mr Spooner's *amour propre* would have insured such evidence in the work of the identity of the sender as would relieve me from personal responsibility in regard to them; and I entered upon the scene of my diplomacy with all the air of Mr Charles Mathews in light comedy.

Any opportunity which the earlier portion of the evening might have afforded for effecting Mr Spooner's object was somehow lost. Whether it was that I had some little analogous business of my own to look after, which of course claimed precedence; or whether the enterprise may have assumed, as enterprises sometimes do, a less propitious aspect under the attempering influences of cold blood, is not material. Certain it is that the evening had warmed into geniality, and even waned into repletion, before I became sensible of the necessity for action; or for some special interposition of Fortune on my client's behalf, if his commission were to be executed at all. We seldom lose, however, when we are playing a game in which our interest is small; it is only when we are throwing our whole heart or our last hundred that it is always *seizes* to *deuce-ace* against us. Having no absorbing interest in the present affair, and being aware of the above feminine principle on the part of her of the scales and bandage, I did not lose my faith in her assistance on the occasion, even at an hour when less skilled waiters upon providence would have given up the game as hopeless. And I had my reward! Did she not, at two o'clock in the morning, throw the charge of Miss Heaviland to her carriage into my hands; and prompt the benign: 'Oh, thank you! Can we not set you down anywhere?' from the good-natured 'she-dragon' who guarded that young lady, in which I read the successful consummation of my little enterprise. 'Could they not set me down?' Of course they could, Oxford Square being, as everybody knows, in the direct road from the Regent's Park to the Temple. Humming contentedly the Abbé l'Attaignat's

Dans un amoureux mystère
Un fiacre est un grand secour,

I entered upon the scene of action.

Glisser un billet is not difficult in a French drama, when Henriette (Rose Cheri) knows perfectly well that it is the *rôle* of Henri (Bresson) to convey to her the letter which no one is to see but the audience, and that she must have her left hand appropriately *posed* to receive it. Glisser un billet, if French novels are to be taken as pictures of society in France—and it is to be presumed they are—is not, in that favoured land, a difficult proceeding, even under direct marital or maternal supervision. But to slip a love-letter when the lady has *not* the cue, and under the ordinary conditions of everyday English life, is, I do hereby warn all enterprising readers of Parisian literature, and will maintain unto the death, a work of profound difficulty, and not to be lightly undertaken. At the same time, to tuck a note the size of a crown-piece, into a disorganised bouquet, thrown negligently beside one in the recesses of a family brougham, at two o'clock in the morning, with no witnesses to the dark deed but a drowsy chaperon and a day-dreaming beauty—for what beauty does not day-dream on her way home from a ball?—affords no great scope for the ingenuity, which I doubt not I should have been able to develop to admiration if the circumstances had demanded it.

'Assuredly,' said I to myself, as, the business accomplished, I prepared to regale myself by my bedroom fire with a mild cigar, which, in the circumstances, I felt I had fairly earned—'assuredly, nature designed me for a diplomatist. There are no failures in life save through precipitancy or sloth. There is the right moment in every enterprise, though the patience to wait till it arrives, and the decision to act when it does, are perhaps the gifts of the few. Nine men out of ten,' I continued, as I felt in my pocket for a fusée, 'in such an affair as to-night's, would infallibly have muddled it.' Here the train of my meditations was suddenly broken; a gentle perspiration rose to my face; my heart fell like a thermometer in an ice-house, and commenced beating in my epigastrum, when, with feelings of the profoundest horror, I drew from my pocket, smelling luxuriously as ever, *Mr Spooner's billet-doux.*

I shuddered! An inevitable result rose with startling distinctness before my eyes. *Something* I had unquestionably tucked into Miss Heaviland's bouquet; and that something, whatever it was, that young lady was, in all probability—with her feet on the fender, it might be, like myself, but alas! with what different feelings—at that moment, that melancholy moment, engaged in inspecting. What was that something? was the distracting problem now to be solved! What had I had in my pocket? Alas! what had I not? the receptacle in question being my invariable depository for all my correspondence until it became too bulky to be kept there any longer. First, I could distinctly remember a communication from my tailor, with a clean abstract of his bill before last, and a communication of the fact, that, if not settled, he would have to place it in the hands of his creditors. That didn't matter much. In these times, it was more than possible that the young lady herself might have had a milliner's bill of her own in the same category, and find comfort in a community of sorrow. Then there was—ah, miserable me!—an autobiographical letter of four pages from Paris, descriptive of the varied relaxations of that metropolis under the empire, from that villain Tom Raffington, who must needs embalm his delinquencies in black and white, to the everlasting confusion of my hitherto irreproachable character. Was there not a little dinner-bill too —*not* from a tavern in Eastcheap; but with as great a disproportion, almost, between the bread and the sack, as honest Falstaff's own: to say nothing of a double ticket for Madame de Montmorency's Full and Fancy Dress-ball at the Prince's Concert-rooms, with an intimation from the fair *beneficiaire* that that made three I owed her for? And a thousand times more distracting than all—yea, than all, said I, in the bitterness of my anguish—a skeleton epilogue, peppered with inharmonious jokelets, to be worked in afterwards, for some private theatricals at Brompton; and three draft impromptus, very rough, for a dinner-party the next evening in Gloucester Place! I, who had the reputation of doing these things so easily! One only comfort there was, the mysterious *something* could be but one of them; and to the investigation of which it was I now proceeded with a heavy heart. Tom Raffington's performance turned up first, and then the epilogue and impromptus. Fortune, I thanked thee! Madame de Montmorency and the tailor came up together; and to my unbounded astonishment, a further dive brought up the little dinner-bill also. The mystery remained unsolved: nothing was wanting; and yet the dreadful *something* was undoubtedly gone. The dread suspense renewed again seemed more dreadful than the knowledge of the direst conceivable reality. 'Present fears are worse than horrible imaginings.' In vain I ransacked my brain and rummaged my memory, lay awake all night, and walked about in a dream all the next day; all was fruitless. I met Miss Heaviland at dinner the following evening, when I let off my impromptus with unbounded success; but what was fame to me with black care at my heart-strings. The young lady made no sign, though I valiantly gave her more than one opportunity: this looked ominous. 'La femme qui ne veut s'apercevoir de rien, s'est aperçue de tout; il faut se tenir terriblement sur ses gardes avec elle,' says the French philosopher. I agreed with him and trembled.

There is a popular German tale, entitled the *Story without an End.* Would that I could emulate its incompleteness; but I have undertaken to make an example of myself for the benefit of the unwary, and am resolved to go to the stake like a hero. Some six months after the above incident, a flush of unexampled prosperity in my usually equal and modest fortunes, had the wholesome effect—not an invariable one of prosperity—of recalling to my recollection a period at the latter end of the preceding year when I chanced to be labouring under one of those temporary estrangements from the favour of the Diva Pecunia which occasionally vary the lot even of the sagest of us. Now, at that period, I had been induced, I might almost say constrained—a circumstance for which I submit the aforesaid Diva Pecunia, and not I, must be held to be wholly and exclusively responsible—to set apart, or place away, or oppignerate, or hypothecate, or effect a mortgage by way of wadset; or, in the plain and simple vernacular, all circumlocution pretermitting and setting aside, to deposit temporarily, with equity of redemption, with one of that useful mercantile body trading under the insignia of the Lombards, a certain article of jewellery described in the duplicate or counterpart of the mortgage instrument as 'Ring, 30s.' Having, in a spirit of mistaken truthfulness, despised availing myself of any of those imaginary nomenclatures under which I am given to understand monetary operations of this nature are not unfrequently conducted, my real name and address was annexed, as well as, in bright-blue letters at the top, the style and designation of the merchant whom I had patronised on the occasion. Need I continue? Need I say that upon a search, in the hour of my prosperity, for this document, which I had carefully stowed away in a small envelope, it was not to be found! Must I, in so many words, admit the harrowing fact, that a comparison of the costume which I had worn on the only occasion in my life on which I had presented myself at three balls at a time with that in which I had had the honour of waiting upon Mrs Shafton on the evening I have mentioned, left no possibility of doubt in my mind that in lieu of Mr Spooner's billet-doux, I had endowed the fair object of his attachment with a *pawnbroker's duplicate!*

My confession is at an end, and carries its own moral. Fortunately, I was the only sufferer on the occasion, Miss Heaviland having, as I have since heard, consented, on the very evening, to share with Tom Shafton the L.6000 and other reversions, to the attainment of which Mr Spooner had devoted the combined poetical capabilities of himself and Charley Giltspur, and the outlay of a little dinner, and other inspiring refreshments before alluded to. He is, however, I am happy to say, not heart-broken, and is, I believe, open to any overtures from any young lady of condition (these advances being now, I am given to understand, expected, by the ingenuous youth of the day, to be made by the weaker vessel) who can offer satisfactory evidence on the question of settlement, and has no brothers. It only occurs to me to add, that if by chance—and it is indeed of course most probable—Miss Heaviland should be a reader of this Journal, and should thus see this my confession, I should not feel that there was the slightest indelicacy—quite the contrary—in her enclosing to me (Pumphandle Court, Temple) anonymously, or in any other manner which the refinement of her feelings, or an advertisement in the second column of the *Times* might suggest, the—the little document above referred to, which it is unnecessary for me again to particularise, and which is of no use to anybody but the owner.

ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

St George is the patron saint of England: at anyrate, there is not one in the calendar who retains any noticeable influence on our affairs or our literature besides the victor of the Dragon. We could enumerate the historical worthies who have had their blunt English characters emblazoned on the celestial roll, and some others who, if they ever existed at all, have left none but saintly traces behind them. But neither the monkish saints, nor St Edward, nor St Thomas of Canterbury, can fairly contest the position unanimously assigned to the heroic and holy St George. For more than six hundred years, St George has [illegible] nearly the same relation to England that St [illegible] has borne to Ireland. Our streets, docks, and [illegible] have been named after him; and while the [illegible] poets of our country have embalmed the [illegible] memory in immortal verse, our politicians [illegible] rendered his renown as permanent as our [illegible]ical institutions, by agreeing to set up the [illegible] the Garter as the highest prize alike of [illegible] state-service, and valour. But, after all, [illegible] only an insignificant province of the vast realm [illegible] has, in the lapse of time, been conceded to the [illegible] of St George. We find whole countries in [illegible] world and in the new called by his name. [illegible] —strangely enough, as will presently appear—[illegible] Roman Church consecrates its religious edifices [illegible] name which represents no saint in their [illegible] Protestant Germany rejoices in his patronage; [illegible] prefers his mythical sway to that of St Mark [illegible] professors of the oriental faith invoke him first [illegible] their apostles, prophets, martyrs, and saints. [illegible] accounts him as her Christian 'god of battles' [illegible] the czar gives the Order of St George to those [illegible] can make out that they have not entirely [illegible] to the valour of English, French, and Turkish [illegible] who, in their turn, get the Order of St George [illegible] supposition that they have trodden the Russian [illegible] dust. Surely it is worth while to collect [illegible] known of the man whose head Time has crowned [illegible] such dazzling honours; and if it be necessary, it [illegible] be still more interesting to trace the growth [illegible] legend which has given rise to such strange and [illegible] reverence from so many different countries [illegible] amongst various forms of faith. First, then, we [illegible] try to tell the genuine old legend as it would [illegible] probability fall from the lips of an aged and [illegible]astic Greek priest; then we will glean [illegible] known of the real George; and, lastly, shew [illegible] fable and the history have been mixed together [illegible] vague popular notion of the sainthood of George [illegible] which all are familiar. Thus would the Greek [illegible] tell his tale.

George of Cappadocia—so called either from [illegible] parents or from the school in which he was [illegible] was born in Cilicia. In youth, he was of [illegible] even lovely presence; as he grew up, he was [illegible] not less for brave deeds than for pure Christian [illegible] Being raised to the tribunate (military), and [illegible] received a summons to relinquish his furlough [illegible] join the eastern army of the emperor forthwith [illegible] set forth on his travels. As he journeyed, he [illegible] near to a certain city of Libya. Now the sad [illegible] that city was on this wise. Some few years [illegible] huge dragon had infested the city, breathing [illegible] from his monstrous throat not only fire and smoke [illegible] also plagues and death. The king of that city [illegible] forth to parley with the hideous enemy, and [illegible] covenant with him, by which the city should [illegible] to the foul beast two sheep daily, and the [illegible] his part, abstain from his evil designs. All [illegible] until there was no longer a sheep left. Then a [illegible] covenant was sealed, by which, to stay the [illegible] anger, the king agreed to sacrifice two virgins [illegible] city daily. These maidens were chosen by lot [illegible] many fair ones perished. At last, in an evil day, [illegible] fatal lot fell upon the king's only daughter, and [illegible] father would have saved the maiden; but the [illegible] rose up enraged, saying: 'We spared not our [illegible] flesh to feed the dragon, neither shall thy [illegible] spared.' Nevertheless, the king would fain have [illegible] his child; but she would not hearken to him, [illegible] only to the voice of duty and of the people. [illegible] she went out to the dragon's den alone, that she might die for the people. As she was going towards the noisome cave in which the dragon dwelt, it was so that George drew nigh, and hearing the maiden weeping, he was troubled in heart; and having learned from her the cause of her sorrow, he bade her be of good comfort, for that he would slay the dragon. The maiden wept the more for such brave kind words, and sought to turn him from his purpose, saying that 'he would surely perish;' but George approached the dwelling of the monster; and when he saw the flame and smoke rushing from his gaping mouth, he called upon the sacred name, and drawing his good sword, sorely smote the dragon. Then taking from the maiden's neck a scarf delicately wrought, he bound it round the monster, and putting the scarf into the maiden's hand, he bade her lead the monster to the city-walls. There, in sight of all the wondering trembling people, he slew the fearful dragon. The king, when he learned that the name of Christ had wrought the wonder of his daughter's deliverance, was himself, with all his people, baptised in that name. The king, too, gave rich gifts to the warrior; but he, for his part, gave them all to the poor, and resisting all their entreaties, he went on his way, and was seen no more in those parts.

Journeying onwards, he came at length to Palestine, where he saw, for the first time, the cruel edict which Diocletian had put forth against the Christians. A copy of the decree was posted on the doors of the church to which he repaired for worship, and when his eye rested on the decree, his soul was moved with holy rage, and drawing his sword, he struck and tore down the imperial edict. Immediately he was seized and dragged before the prefect, who commanded him to offer sacrifice to the gods of the emperor. But this he could not do, and he was sent to the torture. They put him first into a cask full of sharp swords, and rolled him about, thinking they would cut him to death, but he was unhurt. Then the prefect sent unto him two cunning enchanters, who administered a deadly poison, which the warrior drank in the name of his Lord; and when they saw that no hurt followed the draught, the magicians themselves believed, and for their confession they were put to death. At last the angry governor bade his soldiers put the Christian to death by the sword; and George, knowing that his time had come, meekly bowed his head to the stroke, and gave up the ghost.

This is the beautiful fable from which the sanctity of George's two-sided character is derived: now let us glean a little in the harvest-field of history. The only man known as Cappadocian George was of humble parentage, and was bred to the pursuits of an honest trade. By dint of pleasing manners, and a certain energy of character, George succeeded in ingratiating himself with men of influence, by whose favour he was placed on the high road to fortune, as the selected contractor for bacon to the imperial army of the east. The temptations of this position had been felt long before his day, and most undoubtedly have continued in undiminished force up to the present hour. To enhance the profits of his contract, he bought up, and foisted upon the hapless soldiers, rusty bacon. He probably thought that the echo of their grumblings would not reach head-quarters; but he was mistaken. Not all the influence or wealth of himself and friends could save him from disgrace. He, too, like his shadow in the legend, set out upon his travels, and spent his money and leisure in a way that rather surprises us, considering his antecedents. He became a collector of books on a large scale, and has the singularly high honour of being amongst the first private individuals who invested their fortunes in libraries. This fascinating pursuit probably engaged him for some years; and it had this good effect upon his fortunes—that it served to wear away the unfavourable impression left by his dishonesty.

But the crisis of his career was rapidly approaching. To understand this juncture of affairs, we must make a slight detour. It will be remembered that on the death of Constantine the Great, the empire was divided into two parts—Constans holding the sovereignty of the west, and Constantius that of the east. The eastern emperor embraced the Arian tenets, while the western emperor professed the Athanasian dogmas. Athanasius was the patriarch of Alexandria, and, in point of fact, he was, in all but the name, an independent sovereign over a large district. His nominal superior was Constantius, who hated and persecuted him under the combined motives of religion and politics. So long as Constans lived, Athanasius knew that he had a firm friend, and at least a refuge against extreme measures on the part of his enemy on the Byzantine throne. But when Constans died, the brother was no longer deterred from hurling his full weight of vengeance against the princely archbishop of Egypt; and once more he succeeded in driving Athanasius from Alexandria into the Libyan deserts. This local revolution was effected by, and in favour of, Cappadocian George, aided by one Sebastian. The accomplished book-collector—rather than the knavish bacon-factor—received episcopal consecration at the hands of an Arian synod, and, undertaking the civil as well as the ecclesiastical sceptre of the Great Exile, he soon displayed his real character in acts of the most unrighteous and cruel extortion. In this practice, he was unwisely indiscriminate. If he had suffered his religious prejudices to govern his exactions, it would have been safer for himself; but he laid his heavy hand upon all without distinction. Clamour, loud and continuous, made itself heard even at the imperial court; but the heart of Constantius was sore with the memory of the many occasions on which the city of Alexandria had stubbornly resisted his royal will; and he not only turned a deaf ear to all complaints, but actually encouraged his minion by eulogising his virtue and piety. All this was very hard to be borne, and the smothered hatred of the mighty city only waited for an opportunity to throw off its burden and signalise its vengeance. Constantius died, just in time to escape the dethronement which he had richly deserved at the hands of Julian. Julian is called the Apostate; but he never was anything but a pagan from first to last; so that the epithet apostate must be understood as indicating merely a reactionary policy. As a pagan, then, it was not at all likely that he would enter into the controversies and quarrels of Christians, unless for political purposes. But it was not at all a dispute in doctrine which lay between George and his spiritual flock: it was simply a question of taxes. The people had been cowed by the conviction that the Emperor Constantius would support his subordinate from considerations of religious opinion. So that as soon as they heard that the philosophic Julian had ascended the throne, they threw aside all fear, relied upon the simple justice of their cause, and, weary with vexation, proceeded to administer lynch-law upon the reckless tyrant of their city. They seized him, slew him, dragged his corpse through the streets on the back of a camel, and, finally, chopping it in pieces, threw it into the sea, lest by any chance his co-religionists should seek to further their own views at the expense of human justice, by exalting the tyrant to the dignity of a martyr, and his relics to the honours of adoration. They wished his name to be an offence for ever amongst men, if remembered at all. This is the true story of the only George known to history.

We next ask, how he came to be a martyr and saint, with so unusually splendid a halo round his brow? Shortly after his death, when his evil deeds had apparently left no trace behind them, men of his own professed faith began to think of those points in which they agreed with him; and began, too, to think that the persecution they were experiencing had its type, if not its actual commencement, in the horrid death of their own bishop, George. They thought about it until the idea acquired probability, and talked themselves into a belief that it was true. Nothing was easier, in those days, than to pick up a few wild stray flowers of legendary poetry, and to weave them into a chaplet for some favoured hero. Early Attic history consists almost entirely of the same sort of fable as that which invests the name of St George; and if we look for the correspondence of the dragon, we are at least assisted in our search by a passage in the probably spurious 'Remains' of St George, which clearly indicates Athanasius as the dragon—at anyrate, the dragon is no insuperable difficulty in a case where polemics enter largely. When the Arians became absorbed into the Latin Church, it was policy to admit their saints along with them; George was accordingly canonised. On the other hand, when the entire calendar was revised by Pope Gelasius III., it appeared advisable to deprive George of his place in the calendar, and to assign him an honourable prominence amongst 'those decent, doubtful men, whose works are known to God rather than to men.' Further—as the separation between the Latin and the Eastern Churches became more and more decided—although there was not a formal division of the calendar, it was not unnatural that the two following principles should have something to do with the ultimate form of the calendar as held by the respective churches: First, each church would cherish a preference for the saints of its own growth; and second, in proportion to the lack of esteem evinced by the one church, would be the fervent adoration of the other church. Thus, the man whom the Latin Church had degraded, was by the Greek Church elevated to the highest rank. Hence it has happened that St George is the chief of the oriental saints, while he has no place in the western calendar, although his name is familiarly used in the consecration of Roman Catholic chapels (St George's Southwark, for example). From this statement, it is easily understood how all Russian patronage is vested in St George. We have still to account for the connection of St George with England; and this is the most probable explanation: When the British Crusaders—especially the Lion-hearted king—went forth to Palestine, they went under the protection of saints generally, but must have felt rather at a loss for a saint that they could call peculiarly their own. Other nations had their saintly badges and sacred banners, and spirit-stirring invocations: why not England? In the harbours of Greece and of the Archipelago, English ears would catch the melody in which the mariner chanted the praises of his martyred St George: and when Richard came to learn the story of the beloved saint, it was one to charm his fancy and to touch his heart. Seeing, then, that no western nation had recognised the glorious sainthood of George, he adopted the legend and the name as the model and type of his own intended exploits. His illustrious prowess reflected fresh interest on the legend—gave it, in fact, a new meaning. On his return to England, he fulfilled the substance of many a vow breathed amid the din of battle, by instituting the festival of St George in the year 1222.

When Edward III. instituted his Order of the Garter, he looked about, according to precedent, for a patron saint; and surely none worthier to be the head and fountain of England's decorative honour could have been found than he who was supposed—and believed in those days—to have inspired the marvellous achievements of the great Cœur de Lion. Thus it has come to pass that St George for Merry England is the response to the cry 'St George for Holy Russia;' and thus may legends find a home in the hearts and characters of nations who do not believe one word of them.

SPARE MONEY.

One would suppose, from the clamours of free patriots in the House of Commons, that this was a country in a state of desperate poverty and embarrassment. Go in a deputation to the Treasury to plead for a few thousand pounds to accomplish an important public object; and, to judge by the response you get, it might appear as if the British community had not a spare penny beyond what was strictly required to keep square with its creditors, and support a handful of troops and ships. Yet, strange to say, we export a hundred and twenty millions of produce annually now, against about fifty millions' worth in 1841, and our ordinary national expenditure is not greatly beyond what it was forty years ago, while the population is not much less than doubled. Listen to Mr Williams of Lambeth and Mr Roebuck of Sheffield, and you would think it a great matter to save twopence at any time to the nation; and then, again, go to dine with a merchant of London, or a manufacturer of Manchester, and you see a luxury in furniture, in eating, and in drinking, beyond anything of the kind that has ever been known in the world. A merchant of the latter town is said to have spent forty thousand pounds lately in decorating his country-house. One of its leading men went, not long ago, into a jeweller's shop with his wife, and spent in jewellery for her adornment a sum exceeding eleven hundred pounds. It is believed to be not uncommon for a Manchester married lady to spend eight hundred a year in dress. To give five hundred, seven hundred, or even a thousand for a single picture, while on the easel of a living artist, is no uncommon act of these merchant princes. Parsimony seems to be a word only heard of in the House of Commons.

Leaving the House itself to explain how its prominent feelings and transactions so often do not represent any general sentiment or sense in the nation at large—which, however, we take leave to think is a very alarming thing for the House of Commons—we would fain say something about the positive fact of the great luxury here adverted to. We sympathise with the rewards of industry, and of course deprecate all interferences of the nature of sumptuary laws. We assert the right of each individual, be he a fortunate speculator, or only a clever artisan in the enjoyment of high wages, to spend his money as he pleases. But it is one thing to have a right, and another to use it rightly. When we see a man largely, perhaps suddenly, enriched, and employing his wealth only in what ministers to his own or his family's personal gratifications—what solaces the appetites, the senses, or the vanities—we feel, and we are entitled to feel, somewhat shocked. Now, scarcely any rich man is wholly shut up against charities in this country. Few but subscribe to something, or disburse a little money when they hear of a case of extraordinary distress. But the question is, Do the rich, in general, make a right division between their own indulgences and the claims of humanity? Even in what they spend on themselves, it may be questioned, Do they, in general, spend wisely, or otherwise?

Our belief is, that the fortunate classes in general bestow far too much on the indulgence of appetite, caprice, and ostentation, compared with what a Christian humanity can approve of, and in doing so act unwisely even for themselves.

We will not attempt to excite a mere feeling on the subject by exhibiting the contrast between the home of superfluous wealth and the home of want, powerful as that contrast must be in moving benevolent minds. We leave aside that moral obligation of the rich which was expressed in its extreme form in the injunction to the young man to sell off what he had and give it to the poor. We refrain for the present from remarks on that immoral glorification of wealth which tempts so many men into frauds and defalcations, that they may appear not less grand than certain of their neighbours, and prompts to a general vying one with another, in appearances which, after all, only provoke mutual jealousy, and never procure any real or permanent honour. We put the whole matter on simply rational ground. Beyond, we say, a certain moderate satisfaction to the immediate wants, money loses power in a rapidly increasing ratio. In other words, after the simplest needs are supplied, it takes always more and more to procure us any pleasure, either for the senses or the tastes. To illustrate what we mean, cream instead of milk to our tea—what may be purchased in favourable circumstances for a penny—will yield fully as much gratification as an additional wing to an already comfortable house. The first help to locomotion in the setting up of a one-horse carriage is more appreciated than afterwards will be the change to a first-class carriage with liveried servants. It often indeed happens that an extension in style, the setting up of a country-house in addition to one in town, the opening of intercourse with an aristocratic circle of society, is rather productive of discomfort than of true happiness. We have not, therefore, been surprised to hear various wealthy men declare that, after the first two thousand a year, they were sensible of little improvement in their position in this world. It might only have been added, that the serious needs of life may all be satisfied for much less than that sum, and long before so much has been attained, expenditure, in the generality of cases, takes the form of show instead of substance, and the spender feels that he is doing little to increase his own real enjoyments.

This is a rule, however, which does not apply when our abundance is employed in the gratification of the moral feelings. We may go on spending more and more of an overplus for the benefit of others, and find that in the luxury of doing good, as it has been well called, there is no such palling of the appetite as to dull the pleasure, or demand more and more to give us a sensation. Here, then, is the wise way of bestowing unneeded wealth.

But how? Many, in spending on costly luxuries, think they are doing good in the best possible way, by creating a gainful employment for the industrious classes. It is a most soothing unction to lay to their souls; but the immediate gratification proposed to themselves in the first place should of itself raise a suspicion of the soundness of the idea. The truth is, that to employ people in the making of anything not actually required or truly to be enjoyed, is to misapply means, seeing that the people would be supported by these means to better purpose in being set to work which was to redound to actual gratification, and always the more so if the gratification were that of a large instead of a small number, or if the resulting work were capable of being turned to some account in realising further means for human gratification.

To apply superfluous wealth to really good purpose calls for the exercise of great judgment in the consideration of circumstances. Direct relief of suffering, succour of the virtuous poor, claim and deserve a part. Means for that intellectual and moral advancement of the community which promises to diminish suffering and anticipate disaster in future, merit another and considerable portion. The general duty in the case is, that the fortunate part of the community —fortunate, it may be, in natural talent or self-denial —fortunate, perhaps, only in the course of circumstances—should seek to bring up the less fortunate in these respects as far as possible towards their own happy state—striving to do God's work on earth in the lessening of evil and the diffusion of good, and finding their all-sufficient reward in the joy reflected from the faces of their fellow-creatures. There is no equally great law over us here below, and positively no other method of indefinitely extending our enjoyment of life and its blessings. Everything else is bell-ringing, peacocks' feathers, tinsel, and trash.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XCVII.—SPEECHES IN COUNCIL.

'Hietans!' began the chief, for such in reality was the old Indian, 'my children, and brothers in council! I appeal to you to stay judgment in this matter, I am your chief, but I claim no consideration for that; Wakono is my son, but for him I ask no favour; I demand only justice and right—such as would be given to the humblest in our tribe; I ask no more for my son Wakono. Wakono is a brave warrior: who among you does not know it? His shield is garnished with many trophies taken from the hated pale-face; his leggings are fringed with scalps of the Utah and Cheyenne; at his heels drag the long locks of the Pawnee and Arapaho. Who will deny that Wakono—my son Wakono—is a brave warrior?'

A murmur of assent was the response to this paternal appeal.

'The Spanish wolf, too, is a warrior—a brave warrior; I deny it not. He is stout of heart and strong of arm; he has taken many scalps from the enemies of the Hietan; I honour him for his achievements; who among us does not?'

A general chorus of grunts and other ejaculations from both council and spectators responded to this interrogatory. The response, both in tone and manner, was strongly in the affirmative; and I could tell by this that the renegade was the favourite.

The old chief also perceived that such was the prevailing sentiment, and, despite his pretensions to fair-play, he was evidently nettled at the reply. The father of Wakono was undoubtedly no Brutus.

After a momentary pause, he resumed speech, but in a tone entirely altered. He was now painting the reverse side of Hissoo-royo's portrait, and as he threw in the darker touches, it was with evident pique and hostility.

'I honour the Spanish wolf,' he continued; 'I honour him for his strong arm and his stout heart: I have said so; but hear me, Hietans—hear me, children and brothers! there are two of every kind—there is a night and a day—a winter and a summer—a green prairie and a desert plain, and like these is the tongue of Hissoo-royo. It speaks two ways that differ as the light from the darkness—it is double—it forks like the tongue of the rattle-serpent—it is not to be believed.'

The chief ceased speaking, and the Spanish wolf was permitted to make reply. He did not attempt to defend himself from the charge of the 'double tongue;' perhaps he knew that the accusation was just enough, and he had no reason to tremble for his popularity on that score. He must have been a great liar, indeed, to have excelled or even equalled the most ordinary story-teller in the Comanche nation; for the mendacity of these Indians would have been a match for Sparta herself.

The renegade did not even deny the aspersion: he seemed to be confident in his case; he simply replied:

'If the tongue of Hissoo-royo is double, let not the council rely upon his words; let witnesses be called; there are many who are ready to testify to the truth of what Hissoo-royo has spoken.'

'First hear Wakono! Let Wakono be heard! Where is Wakono?'

These demands were made by various members of the council, who spoke almost simultaneously.

Once more the crier's voice was heard calling 'Wakono!'

'Brothers!' again spoke the chief; 'it is for this I would stay your judgment. My son is not here; he went back upon the trail, and has not returned. I know not his purpose. My heart is in doubt—but not in fear. Wakono is a strong warrior, and can take care of himself. He will not be long absent; he must soon return. For this I ask you to delay the judgment.'

A murmur of disapprobation followed this avowal. The allies of the Spanish wolf evidently mustered stronger than the friends of the young chief.

The renegade once more addressed the council.

'What trifling would this be, warriors of the Hietan? Two suns have gone down, and this question is not decided! I ask only justice. By our laws, the judgment cannot stand over. The captives must belong to some one. I claim them as mine, and I offer witnesses to prove my right. Wakono has no claim, else why is he not here to avow it. He has no proofs but his own word; he is ashamed to stand before you without proof—that is why he is now absent from the camp.'

'Wakono is not absent,' cried a voice from among the bystanders; 'he is in the camp!'

This announcement produced a sensation, and I could perceive that the old chief partook equally with the others of the surprise thus created.

'Who says Wakono is in the camp?' inquired he in a loud voice.

An Indian stepped forth from the crowd of spectators. I recognised the man whom I had met crossing from the horse-guard.

'Wakono is in the camp,' repeated he, as he paused outside the circle. 'I saw the young chief; I spoke with him.'

'When?'

'Only now.'

'Where?'

The man pointed to the scene of our accidental rencontre.

'He was going yonder,' said he; 'he went among the trees—I saw him no more.'

This intelligence evidently increased the astonishment of all. They could not comprehend why Wakono should be upon the ground, and yet not come forward to assert his claim. Had he abandoned it altogether?

The father of the claimant appeared as much puzzled as any one; he made no attempt to explain the absence of his son: he could not; he stood silent, and evidently in a state of mystification.

Several now suggested that a search be made for the absent warrior. It was proposed to send messengers throughout the camp—to *search the grove.*

My blood ran cold as I listened to the proposal; my knees trembled beneath me. I knew that if the grove was to be searched, I should have no chance of remaining longer concealed. The dress of Wakono was conspicuous; I saw that there was none other like it: no other wore a robe of jaguar-skins, and this would betray me. Even the paint would not avail: I should be led into the firelight; the counterfeit would be detected. I should be butchered upon the spot—perhaps tortured for the treatment we had given the true Wakono, which would soon become known.

My apprehensions had reached the climax of acuteness, when they were suddenly relieved by some words from the Spanish wolf.

'Why search for Wakono?' cried he; 'Wakono knows his own name; it has been called, and loud enough. Wakono has ears—surely he can hear for himself, if he be in the camp. Call him again, if you will!'

This proposition appeared reasonable. It was adopted, and the crier once more summoned the young chief by name.

The voice, as all perceived, could have been heard to the furthest bounds of the camp, and far beyond.

An interval was allowed, during which there reigned perfect silence, every one bending his ears to listen. There came no answer—no Wakono appeared to the summons.

'Now!' triumphantly exclaimed the renegade, 'is it not as I have said? Warriors! I demand your judgment.'

There was no immediate reply. A long pause followed, during which no one spoke, either in the circle or among the spectators.

At length the oldest of the council rose, re-lit the calumet, and, after taking a whiff from the tube, handed it to the Indian seated on his left. This one, in like manner, passed it to the next, and he to the next, until the pipe had made the circuit of the fire, and was returned to the old warrior who had first smoked from it. The latter now laid aside the pipe, and in a formal manner, but in a voice inaudible to the spectators, proposed the question. The vote was taken in rotation, and was also delivered *sotto voce.* The judgment only was pronounced aloud.

The decision was singular, and somewhat unexpected. The jury had been moved by a strong leaning towards equity, and an amicable adjustment that might prove acceptable to all parties.

The horse was adjudged to Wakeno—the maiden was declared the property of the Spanish wolf!

CHAPTER XCVIII.

A ROUGH COURTSHIP.

The decision appeared to give satisfaction to him. A grim smile upon his face testified that the renegade himself was pleased. How could he be otherwise? He had certainly the best of the suit, for what was a beautiful horse to a beautiful woman, and such a woman?

Even the white-haired chief seemed satisfied. Perhaps, of the two, the old savage jockey preferred the horse? It might have been different had Wakono been upon the ground. I was much mistaken if he would so tamely have acquiesced in the decision.

Yes, the renegade was satisfied—more than this: he was rejoiced. His bearing bespoke his consciousness of the possession of a rare and much-coveted thing. He was unable to conceal the gratification he felt; and with an air of triumph and exultation, he approached the spot where the captive sat.

As soon as the sentence was pronounced, the Indians who had been seated rose to their feet. The council was dismissed. Some of the members strolled off on their own business; others remained by the great fire, mixing among their comrades, no longer with the solemn gravity of councillors, but chatting, laughing, shouting, and gesticulating as glibly and gaily as if they had been so many French dancing-masters.

The trial and its objects appeared to be at once forgotten; neither plaintiff, defendant, nor cause, seemed any longer to occupy the thoughts of any one. The horse had been delivered to a friend of Wakono—the maiden to Hissoo-royo—and the thing was settled and over.

Perhaps, here and there, some young brave, with a pain in his heart, may have bent wistful glances upon the lovely captive. No doubt there were many who looked with envious thoughts upon Hissoo-royo and his fortunes. If so, their emotions were concealed, their glances furtive.

After the council was over, no one interfered—no one seemingly took any interest either in the renegade or his pale-faced squaw; they were left to themselves.

And to me. From that moment, my eyes

thoughts rested only on them; I saw no one else; I thought of nothing else; I watched but the 'wolf' and his victim.

The old chief had retired into the tent. Isolina had been left alone.

Only a moment alone. Had it been otherwise, I should have sprung forward. My fingers had moved mechanically towards my knife; but there was not time. In the next instant, Hissoo-royo stood beside her.

He addressed her in Spanish; he did not desire the others to understand what was said. Speaking in this language, there would be less danger.

There was one who listened to every word. I listened—not a syllable escaped me.

'Now!' began he, in an exulting tone—'Now, Doña Isolina de Vargas! you have heard? I know you understand the tongue in which the council has spoken—your *native* tongue. Ha, ha, ha!'

The brute was jeering her.

'You are mine—soul and body, mine; you have heard?'

'I have heard,' was the reply, in a tone of resignation!

'And surely you are satisfied; are you not? You should be. I am white as yourself—I have saved you from the embrace of a red Indian. Surely you are satisfied with the judgment?'

'I am satisfied.'

This was uttered in the same tone of resignation. The answer somewhat surprised me.

''Tis a lie!' rejoined the brutal monster; 'you are playing false with me, sweet señorita. But yesterday you spoke words of scorn—you would scorn me still?'

'I have no power to scorn you; I am your captive.'

'Carrambo! you speak truth. You have no power either to scorn or refuse me. Ha, ha, ha! And as little do I care if you did; you may like me or not at your pleasure. Perhaps you will take to me in time, as much as I may wish it; but that will be for *your* consideration, sweet señorita! Meanwhile, you are mine—body and soul you are mine, and I mean to enjoy my prize after my own fashion.'

The coarse taunt caused my blood, already hot enough, to boil within my veins. I grasped the haft of my knife, and like a tiger stood cowering on the spring. My intent was, first to cut down the ruffian, and then set free the limbs of the captive with the blood-stained blade.

The chances were still against me. A score of savages were yet around the fire. Even should he fall at the first blow, I could not hope to get clear.

But I could bear it no longer; and would have risked the chances at that moment, had not my foot been stayed by some words that followed.

'Come!' exclaimed the renegade, speaking to his victim, and making sign for her to follow him—'Come, sweet señorita! This place is too public. I would talk with you elsewhere: I know where there are softer spots for that fair form to recline upon—pretty glades and arbours, choice retreats within the shadow of the grove. There, dearest, shall we retire. *Vamos!*'

Though hideous the signification of this mock-poetic speech, I joyed at hearing it; it arrested my hand and limb, both of which had been ready for action. It promised a *better opportunity*.

With an effort, therefore, I restrained myself, and resolved to wait.

I listened for the reply of Isolina; I watched her as well; I noted her every movement.

I saw that she pointed to her limbs—to the thong-fastenings around her ankles.

'How can I follow you?' she inquired, in a calm voice, and in a tone of surprise. Surely that tone was feigned? Surely she meditated some design?

'True,' said the man, turning back, and drawing the knife from his belt. 'Carrai! I had not thought of that; but we shall soon'——

He did not finish the sentence; he stopped in the middle of it, and in an attitude that betokened hesitation. In this attitude he remained a while, gazing into the eyes of his victim: then, as if suddenly changing his mind, he struck the knife back into its sheath, and at the same time cried out:

'By the Virgin! I shall not trust you. You are too free of limb, sweet *margarita!* you might try to give me the slip. This is a better plan. Come! raise yourself up—a little higher—so. Now we go—now for the grove. *Vamos!*'

While delivering the last words, the ruffian bent himself over the half-prostrate captive; and, placing his arm underneath, wound it around her waist. He then raised her upward until her bosom rested upon his—the bosom of my betrothed in juxtaposition with the painted breast of this worse than savage!

I saw it, and slew him not; I saw it, and kept cool—I can scarcely tell why, for it is not a characteristic of my nature. My nerves, from being so much played upon during the preceding hours, had acquired the firmness of steel; perhaps this enabled me to endure the sight—this, combined with the almost certain prospect of an improved opportunity.

At all events, I kept cool, and remained in my place; though only for a moment longer.

CHAPTER XCIX.

THE CRISIS.

The renegade having raised the unresisting captive in his arms, proceeded to carry her from the spot. He scarcely carried her; her feet, naked and bound, were trailing upon the grass, both together.

He passed the lodge, and was going towards the copse, in an oblique direction. The savages who saw him only shouted and laughed!

I waited neither to see nor hear more. Still keeping within the timber, I glided along its edge; with quick but noiseless step I went, making for the same point towards which the ruffian ravisher was tending.

I arrived first, and, stooping under the shadow of the trees, waited, with knife in hand, firm grasped and ready.

His burden had delayed him; he had stopped midway to rest, and was now standing scarcely ten paces from the edge of the grove, with the girl still in his arms, and apparently leaning against him.

There was a momentary wavering in my mind, as to whether I should not then rush forth, and strike the *coup*. The chance seemed as good as I might have.

I was about deciding in the affirmative, when I saw that Hissoo-royo had again taken up his burden, and was moving towards me. He was making directly for the spot where I stood. The crisis was near!

It was even nearer than I thought. The man had scarcely made three steps from the point of rest, when I saw him stumble and fall to the earth, carrying the captive along with him!

The fall appeared accidental. I might have deemed it so, but for the wild shout with which it was accompanied. Something more than a mere stumble elicited that fearful cry!

There was a short struggle upon the ground—the bodies became separated. One was seen to spring suddenly back; I saw it was Isolina! There was something in her hand—both moonlight and firelight gleamed upon a crimsoned blade!

She who grasped it bent for an instant downward—its keen edge severed the thongs from her limbs, and the moment after, she was running in full flight across the level sward of the camp-ground.

Without reflection, I sprang out of the covert and rushed after. I passed the renegade, who had half-regained his feet, and appeared but slightly wounded. Astonishment as much as aught else seemed to hold him to the spot. He was shouting and swearing—calling for help, and uttering threats of vengeance.

I could have slain him, and was half-inclined to the act; but there was no time to stay. I only thought of overtaking the fugitive, and aiding her in her flight.

The alarm was given—the camp was in commotion—fifty savages were starting upon the chase.

As we ran, my eyes fell upon a horse—a white horse. It was the steed; a man was leading him by a lazo. He was taking him from the fires towards the ground occupied by the mustangs; he was going to picket him on the grass.

Horse and man were directly in front of us, as we ran—in front of the fugitive. She was making towards them; I divined her intention.

In a few seconds she was up to the horse, and had seized the rope. The Indian struggled, and tried to take it away from her; the red blade gleamed in his eyes, and he gave back.

He still clung to the rope, but in an instant it was cut from his hands, and, quick as thought, the heroic woman leaped upon the back of the steed, and was seen galloping away.

The Indian was one of the horse-guards, and was therefore armed; he carried bow and quiver. Before the horse had galloped beyond reach, he had bent his bow, and sent an arrow from the string. I heard the 'wheep' of the shaft, and fancied I heard it strike; but the steed kept on!

I had plucked up one of the long spears as I ran across the camp. Before the Indian could adjust another arrow to the string, I had pinned him to the grass.

I drew back the spear, and, keeping the white horse in view, ran on.

I was soon in the midst of the mustangs; many of them had already stampeded, and were galloping to and fro over the ground. The guards were dismayed, but as yet knew not the cause of the alarm. The steed with his rider passed safely through their line.

I was following on foot. Fifty savages were after me; I could hear their shouts.

I could hear them cry 'Wakono,' but I was soon far in advance of all. The horse-guards, as I passed them, were shouting 'Wakono!'

As soon as I had cleared the horse-drove, I again perceived the steed; but he was now some distance off. To my joy, he was going in the right direction—straight for the yuccas upon the hill. My men would see and intercept him.

I ran along the stream with all speed. I reached the broken bank, and, without stopping, rushed into the gully for my horse.

What was my astonishment to find that he was gone!—my noble steed gone, and in his place the spotted mustang of the Indian! I looked up and down the channel; I looked along its banks—Moro was not in sight.

I was puzzled, perplexed, furious. I knew no explanation of the mystery—I could think of none. Who could have done it? Who? My followers must have done it? Rube must have done it? but why? In my hot haste, I could find no reason for this singular action.

I had no time to reflect—not a moment. I drew the animal from the water, and leaping upon his back, rode out of the channel.

As I regained the level of the plain, I saw mounted men, a crowd of them coming from the camp. They were the savages in pursuit; one was far ahead of the rest, and before I could turn my horse to flee, he was close up to me. In the moonlight I easily recognised him—it was Hissoo-royo the renegade.

'Slave!' shouted he, speaking in the Coman tongue, and with furious emphasis, 'it is you have planned this. Squaw! coward! you shall The white captive is mine—mine, Wakono! you'——

He did not finish the sentence. I still carried Comanche spear; my six months' service in a regiment now stood me in stead; the mustang handsomely, and carried me full tilt upon my foe.

In another instant the renegade and his horse parted; the former lay levelled upon the transfixed with the long spear, while the latter galloping riderless over the plain!

At this crisis I perceived the crowd coming up close to the spot. There were twenty or more, saw that I should soon be surrounded.

A happy idea came opportunely to my relief. along I had observed that I was mistaken for Wak The Indians in the camp had cried 'Wakono;' horse-guards shouted 'Wakono' as I passed; pursuers were calling 'Wakono' as they rode the renegade had fallen with the name upon lips: the spotted horse, the robe of jaguar-skin plumed head-dress, the red hand, the white cross proclaimed me Wakono!

I urged my horse forward, and reined up in fr of the pursuers. I raised my arm, and shook it menace before their faces; at the same instant cried out in a loud voice:

'I am Wakono! Death to him who follows!'

I spoke in Comanche. I was not so sure of correctness of my words—either of the pronunciati the syntax—but I had the gratification to perceive I was understood. Perhaps my gestures helped savges to comprehend me—the meaning of these not to be mistaken.

From whatever cause, the pursuers made no furth advance; but one and all, drawing in their horse halted upon the spot.

I stayed not for further parley, but, whe quickly round, galloped off as fast as the mus could carry me.

CHAPTER C.

THE LAST CHASE.

On facing towards the hill, I perceived the steed not so distant. His white body, gleaming under clear moonlight, could have been easily distingui at a far greater distance. I had expected to see much further away; but, after all, the tilt of lance and the menace delivered to the pursuing horsem had scarcely occupied a score of seconds, and he co not in the time have gone out of sight.

He was still running between myself and the of the hill—apparently keeping along the bank of stream.

I put the Indian horse to his full speed. The p of my knife served for whip and spur. I was no lon encumbered with the spear; it had been left in body of Hissoo-royo.

I kept my eyes fixed upon the steed, but he was closing in to the timber that skirted the base of hill; he was nearing the bend where I had taken the water, and would soon be hidden from my behind the bushes.

All at once I saw him swerve, and strike away the left, across the open plain. To my surprise I this, for I had conjectured that his rider was ai to reach the cover offered by the thicket.

Without waiting to think of an explanation, I bent the mustang into the diagonal line, and gallo forward.

I was in hopes of getting nearer by the advant thus given me, but I was ill satisfied with the creep pace of the Indian horse, so unlike the long, stretch of my noble Moro. Where was he? Why was I not bestriding him?

The white steed soon shot clear of the hill, and was now running upon the plain that stretched beyond it.

I saw that I was not gaining upon him; on the contrary, he was every moment widening the distance between us. Where was Moro? Why had he been taken away?

At that instant I perceived a dark horseman making along the foot of the ridge, as if to intercept me; he was dashing furiously through the thicket that skirted the base of the declivity. I could hear the bushes rattling against the flanks of his horse; he was evidently making all the haste in his power, at the same time aiming to keep concealed from the view of any one upon the plain.

I recognised my horse, and upon his back the thin, lank form of the earless trapper!

We met the moment after, at the point where the thicket ended. Without a word passing between us, both simultaneously flung ourselves to the ground, exchanged horses, and remounted. Thank Heaven! Moro was at last between my knees!

'Now, young fellur!' cried the trapper, as I parted from him, 'gallip like durnation, an kitch up wi' her! We'll soon be arter on yur trail—all right thur. Away!'

I needed no prompting from Rube; his speech was not finished before I had sprung my horse forward, and was going like the wind.

It was only then that I could comprehend why the horses had been changed; a *ruse* it was—an afterthought of the cunning trappers! Had I mounted my own conspicuous steed by the camp, the Indians would in all probability have suspected something, and continued the pursuit; it was the spotted mustang that had enabled me to carry out the counterfeit!

I had now beneath me a horse I could depend upon; and with renewed vigour I bent myself to the chase. For the third time, the black and white stallions were to make trial of their speed—for the third time was it to be a struggle between these noble creatures.

Would the struggle be hard, and long? Would Moro again be defeated? Such were my reflections as I swept onward in the pursuit.

I rode in silence; I scarcely drew breath, so keen were my apprehensions about the result.

A long start had the prairie-horse. My delay had thrown me far behind him—nearly a mile. But for the friendly light, I should have lost sight of him altogether; but the plain was open, the moon shining brightly, and the snow-white form, like a meteor, beaconed me onward.

I had not galloped far, before perceiving that I rapidly gained upon the steed. Surely he was not running at his fleetest? Surely he was going more slowly than was his wont?

Oh! could his rider but know who was coming after!—could she but hear me! I would have called, but the distance was still too great. She could not have heard even my shouts; how could she distinguish my voice?

I galloped on in silence. I was gaining—constantly and rapidly gaining. Surely I was drawing nearer? or were my eyes playing false under the light of the moon?

I fancied that the steed was running heavily—slowly and heavily—as if he was labouring in the race. I fancied—no, it was no fancy—I was sure of it! Beyond a doubt, he was not going at his swiftest speed!

What could it mean? Was he broken by fatigue?

Still nearer and nearer I came, until scarcely three hundred yards appeared between us. I fancied that my shouts might be heard, that my voice——

I called aloud; I called the name of my betrothed, coupling it with my own; but no answer came back—no sign of recognition to cheer me.

The ground that now lay between us favoured a race-course speed; and I was about putting my horse to his full stretch, when, to my astonishment, I saw the steed stagger forward, and fall headlong to the earth!

It did not check my career, and in a few seconds more I was upon the spot, and halting over horse and rider, still prostrate.

I flung myself from the saddle, and drew nearer. Isolina had disengaged herself, and risen to her feet. With her right hand clasping the red knife, she stood confronting me.

'Savage! approach me not!' she cried in the Comanche tongue, and with a gesture that told her determination.

'Isolina! I am not—— It is'——

'Henri!'

No words interrupted that wild embrace; no sound could be heard save that made by our hearts, as they throbbed closely together.

* * *

Silently I stood upon the plain with my betrothed in my arms. Moro was by our side, proudly curving his neck and chafing the steel between his foaming lips. At our feet lay the prairie-horse with the barb in his vitals, and the feathered shaft protruding from his side. His eyes were fixed and glassy; blood still ran from his spread nostrils; but his beautiful limbs were motionless in death!

Horsemen were seen approaching the spot. We did not attempt to flee from them: I recognised my followers.

We looked back over the plain; there was no sign of pursuit; but for all that, we did not tarry there. We knew not how soon the Indians might be after us; the friends of Hissoo-royo might start forth upon the trail of Wakono!

It was near daybreak when we halted to rest, and then only after the prairie had been fired behind us.

We found shelter in a pretty grove of acacias, and a grassy turf on which to repose. My wearied followers soon fell asleep.

I slept not; I watched over the slumbers of my betrothed. Her beautiful head rested upon my knees; her soft damask cheek was pillowed upon the robe of jaguar-skins, and my eyes were upon it. The thick tresses had fallen aside, and I saw——

The matador, too, had been merciful! or had gold bribed him from his cruel intent? No matter which! he had failed in his fiendish duty. There in full entirety were those delicate organs—perfect, complete. I saw but the trifling scar where the gold circlet had been rudely plucked—the source of that red hemorrhage that had been seen by Cyprio!

I was too happy to sleep.

It was our last night upon the prairies. Before the setting of another sun, we had crossed the Rio Grande, and arrived in the camp of our army. Under the broad protecting wings of the American eagle, my betrothed could repose in safety until that blissful hour when——

* * * * *

Of the Comanches we never heard more. The story of one only was afterwards told—a fearful tale. Ill-fated Wakono! A horrid end was his.

An oft-told tale by the prairie camp-fire is that of the skeleton of an Indian warrior found clasping the trunk of a tree! Wakono had horribly perished.

We had no design of giving him to such a fate. Without thought had we acted; and though he may have deserved death, we had not designed for him such terrible retribution. Perhaps I was the only one who had any remorseful feeling; but the remembrance of that scalp-bedecked shield—the scenes in that Cyprian grove—those weeping captives, wedded to a woful lot—the remembrance of these cruel realities evermore rose before my mind, stifling the remorse I should otherwise have felt for the doom of the ill-starred savage. His death, though terrible in kind, was merited by his deeds, and was perhaps as just as punishments usually are.

Poetical justice demands the death of Ijurra, and by the hand of Holingsworth. Truth enables me to satisfy the demand.

On my return to the camp, I learned that the act was already consummated—the brother's blood had been avenged!

It was a tragic tale, and would take many chapters in the telling. I may not give them here. Let a few particulars suffice.

From that dread night, Holingsworth had found a willing hand to aid him in his purpose of retribution—one who yearned for vengeance keenly as himself. Wheatley was the man.

The two, with a chosen party, had thrown themselves on the trail of the guerrilla, and with Pedro as their guide, had followed it far within the hostile lines. Like sleuth-hounds had they followed it night and day, until they succeeded in tracking the guerrilleros to their lair.

It was a desperate conflict—hand to hand and knife to knife—but the rangers at length triumphed; most of the guerrilleros were slain, and the band nearly annihilated.

Ijurra fell by Holingsworth's own hand; while the death of the red ruffian El Zorro, by the bowie knife of the Texan lieutenant, was an appropriate punishment for the cruelty inflicted upon Conchita. The revenge of both was complete, though both still bore the sorrow within their hearts.

The expedition of the two lieutenants was productive of other fruits. In the head-quarters of the guerrilla they found many prisoners, Yankees and Ayankieados—among others, that rare diplomatist Don Ramon de Vargas. Of course the old gentleman was released from captivity, and had arrived at the American camp, just in time to welcome his fair daughter and future son-in-law from their grand *ante*-hymeneal 'tour upon the prairies.'

THE END OF THE WAR-TRAIL.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

JUNE, as usual, has brought the beginning of a holiday alike to school-boys and philosophers—the learned societies have wound up their sessions, and the gray-beards, leaving science to take care of herself for a while indoors, are cogitating over the best way of making recreation enjoyable. Some will go dredging; some botanising; some insect-hunting; some on geological explorations; some to visit savans abroad; and not a few have matter in hand for the British Association, which is to meet in Dublin on the 26th of August.

Promising circumstances attended the winding-up. Dr Tyndall gave a course of lectures at the Royal Institution, 'On Sound and some Associated Phenomena.' Professor Huxley enlightened an audience at the same place concerning neural phenomena, and told them it was an error to believe that nervous action and electric action are, as some suppose, identical. Sir H. Rawlinson discoursed also at the same place, and before the Geographical Society, on Persia and the Persians; and Mr Paget, lecturing 'On the Rythmic Action of the Heart' to the Royal Society, gave a summary of what is known on the subject, and drew broad philosophical conclusions therefrom, as became one who ranks among the ablest of physiologists. The president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Mr Robert Stephenson, invited some 800 or 900 of the learned, the scientific, and mechanical, to a conversazione, in which, though the throng was great and the temperature uncomfortable, good things were spoken and excellent things shown. Among the latter were certain glass tubes bulbed at one end, in which Mr Appold shewed that water may easily be frozen even in a hot room. He produces ice, and thaws it again and again, in presence of all beholders. And there was shewn *the Nautilus*, a newly invented machine or diving-bell, which appears admirably adapted for working under water. The model rose and fell in its glass cistern, shewing how great stones might be lowered and deposited, in a way that seems to have something magical about it. According to the inventor's description, 'it is entirely independent of suspension; its movements are entirely dependent on the will of those within it, and without reference to those who may be stationed without. It possesses the power of lifting large weights *per se*, and at the same time is perfectly safe, by common care, in its operations—this latter the greatest desideratum of all. The form of the machine is not arbitrary, but depends entirely on the nature of the work to be performed, adapting itself to the various circumstances attending any given position. The shape of the model exhibited is a flat oval, its base smaller than the crown, with a domed roof; and the interior partitioned into several chambers. Unlike the ordinary diving-bell, it is so constructed as to float on the surface.

The workman enters through a valved opening in the roof, turns a tap, water flows into a chamber, and by its weight causes the descent of the machine. At the same time, air is admitted by a flexible tube from the receiver of a steam air-condensing pump at the surface, the air in which has been brought to a density somewhat greater than that of the water at the depth it is proposed to attain.' Air and water gauges indicate to the workman the density of the air, and the exact lifting-power that may be employed for the laying of stones or removal of wreck or heavy objects from the bottom. The construction of the machine is such, that by discharging the water-ballast and regulating the valves, enormous weights, many tons, may be raised with scarcely an effort. In deep water, the workman steps out and pushes it from place to place with his hands; but in tides and currents, it is moved and steadied by cables. Will the American engineers who have engaged to raise the sunken ships in Sebastopol harbour make use of the Nautilus?

Professor Edmund Davy has read a paper to the Royal Dublin Society on a cement which he obtains by melting together in an iron vessel two parts by weight of common pitch with one part of gutta-percha. It forms a homogeneous fluid, which is much more manageable for many useful purposes than gutta-percha alone, and which, after being poured into cold water, may be easily wiped dry and kept for use.

'My first trials with this cement,' says the professor, 'put it to a very severe test. I used it as a substitute for plumber's solder in repairing the lead gutters on the roof of my house, which were cracked in several places, and admitted water freely; and also to stanch the leaks in an old common iron forcing-pump, attached for yielding a supply of water for the use of two houses, and raising it about thirty feet. For these purposes, I found it quite effectual. All that was necessary in the case of the gutters was to remove with a brush all loose earthy matters from the cracked lead, slightly warm it with a hot iron, then pour the cement in a fluid state on the cracks so as to cover them on both sides.' The pump was repaired with equal success, the leaks being first wiped dry; and the professor continues: 'I entertain no apprehension that the warmth of our climate at any time will impair the efficacy of this cement, which applied to repair lead, zinc, or iron gutters; for though it softens at a comparatively low temperature, it still adheres most tenaciously to metals and other substances, and does not allow water to pass through it.' Vessels of any kind may be similarly patched or repaired, and be ready for use in a few hours afterwards; and wet metallic surfaces may be joined as well as dry ones, if they are warm. And further, to quote again from the paper, the cement 'adheres with the greatest tenacity to wood, stones, glass, porcelain, ivory, leather, parchment, paper, hair, feathers, silk, woollen, cotton, linen fabrics, &c. It is well adapted for glazing windows, and as a cement for aquariums. As far as my experience has yet extended,' adds Professor Davy, 'the cement does not appear to affect water, and will apparently be found applicable for coating metal tanks; to secure the joints of stone-tanks; to make a glue for joining wood, which will not be affected by damp; to prevent the depredation of insects on wood. The heavy oak beams and rafters in the roof of the Royal Dublin Society are attacked to a considerable extent by insects—as the weevil, &c. As this cement is soluble in volatile oils, an application of a solution of the cement in turpentine or naphtha might be beneficial, and arrest the ravages of the insects. It may be highly deserving of inquiry whether the cement may not be applied to preserve surfaces of metal and wood exposed to the atmosphere, and to fresh water; also to protect anchors, chain-cables, &c., from the corroding agencies of sea-water.' We doubt not that due advantage will be taken of Professor Davy's experiments and suggestions.

The Linnæan Society, who are now comfortably lodged by side of the Royal Society in Burlington House, held their anniversary meeting very happily in their new quarters. In the last published part of their *Proceedings*, there is some interesting information concerning certain trees of Western Africa which produce the gum used in the making of copal varnish; and on the Timbuctoo palm, seedlings of which are eaten either raw or roasted by the negroes, the tree itself being felled to procure its sugar. In India, the natives accomplish the same object by merely wounding the spadix, and collecting the sap as it flows; and on this point Dr Seemann remarks: 'The wanton destruction of the trees by the one party, and the careful husbanding of them by the other, is the reason why Africa and America have never furnished, and as long as the present process of destruction is continued, will never furnish any palm-sugar—a product of which Asia sends to Europe alone several thousand tons annually.'—Another fellow of the society, Rev. M. J. Berkeley, has a 'Note on the Use of the Rhizoma of Pteris aquilina as an Article of Food,' in which, after explaining that the root of this species of fern abounds in starch and mucilage, and is used as food in Northern Europe, Siberia, Normandy, and New Zealand, he says: 'Having lately had occasion to examine the rhizoma of our common bracken, it became a matter of interest to ascertain what sort of food might be afforded by it. I accordingly roasted some of the rhizomata, and found them eatable, but extremely disagreeable from their slimy consistence and peculiar flavour, in both of which respects they precisely resemble ill-ripened brinjals. It struck me, however, that they might afford a better food if the slimy matter could be removed. I accordingly scraped some of the rhizomata, which had been first washed and peeled, avoiding, however, the two columns of hard coloured tissue with which they are threaded, and then placed the pulp thus obtained in water. After four-and-twenty hours, the water had become extremely slimy, and of a yellow brown. This was carefully decanted, and the pulp washed again with water, which was now quite colourless. This was also decanted, and the pulp, when sufficiently dry, was kneaded into a cake, and baked upon the hearth. The result was a coarse but palatable food, perfectly free from any disagreeable flavour—much better, indeed, to my taste, and probably not less nutritious than cassava-bread.' Whether nurture and cultivation would effect any such change on fern-roots as on the wild parsnip, we do not know, but it might be worth while to try a course of experiments.

The food-question is so pre-eminently interesting, that we may be pardoned for devoting to it another paragraph or two. In the Journal of the Canadian Institute, Mr Paul Kane of Toronto, gives an account of his travels among the Chinook Indians, who inhabit a portion of the north-west coast of America and of Vancouver's Island—a region to which many an eager eye is now cast in anticipation of the expiry of the Hudson's Bay Company's charter. Mr Kane states: 'The only vegetables in use among the Chinooks are the *Camas* and *Wappattoo*. The Camas is a bulbous root, much resembling the onion in outward appearance, but is more like the potato when cooked, and is very good eating. The Wappattoo is somewhat similar, but larger, and not so dry or delicate in its flavour. They are found in immense quantities in the plains in the vicinity of Fort Vancouver, and in the spring of the year present a most curious and beautiful appearance, the whole surface displaying an uninterrupted sheet of bright ultramarine blue from the innumerable blossoms of these plants. They are cooked by digging a hole in the ground, then putting down a layer of hot stones, covering them with dry grass, on which the roots are placed. The hole is then closed by another layer of grass and of earth, perforated by a small orifice, through which water is poured, and immediately closed; and the water on reaching the hot stones is converted into steam, which in a short time completely cooks the roots.'

We have heard that a new way of making bread has been successfully tried at the great biscuit-factory at Carlisle. According to a statement in the *Times*, the process 'consists in compressing the air in the vessel in which the flour is contained before admitting the water charged with gas (carbonic acid?), so as to prevent the escape of the gas before the process of mixing or kneading is completed. It is said that the bread can thus be made with perfect precision of any degree of lightness, and that, owing to the avoidance of the waste consequent upon the chemical changes which take place during the course of fermentation, an economy of 10 per cent. will be effected.'

The Earl of Ducie has communicated a suggestive paper to the Scottish Arboricultural Society, 'On the Effects of Geological Position on Certain Coniferæ,' from which planters of fir-trees, especially of foreign kinds, may take a hint. As a general rule, he remarks, the trees thrive best in proportion to the depth of surface-soil on which they stand; strikingly shewn by the *Deodar* and *Pinus insignis*. The former is described as 'the most accommodating of all the *Coniferæ*. No position and no variety of soil appear to come amiss to it; on lime or sandstone, rock or clay, it grows with equal facility.' The *Abies Douglassi* also grows as vigorously on the cold and sterile shales of the carboniferous limestone, as on the deep and warm soil of the Old Red Sandstone. On the other hand, the earl notifies: 'The most fastidious of the Coniferæ which I have had an opportunity of observing, is undoubtedly *Cryptomeria japonica*. On the limestone, its leading shoot is always defective, and its growth generally devoted to the formation of a nest-like mass of small shoots; while on the Old Red, a formation deficient in lime, its growth is regular, upright, and graceful, and so rapid, that I have no hesitation in affirming that in this locality it would outgrow the larch.' The earl's experiments have been made at Tortworth Park, Gloucestershire: as yet, they are too few to furnish positive data; and we would suggest that planters in other parts of the kingdom might render good service to arboriculture by further experiments and observations, and making them publicly known.

The attention of mariners, particularly of those navigating the Baltic, has been called to the published charts, many of which are defective in giving the true variation of the compass needle. The variation, or departure to the west of the true north, as is generally known, reached its maximum, 24 degrees, in 1836; and since then it has been going back towards the east at the rate of from 6 to 7 minutes a year. Consequently, unless proper allowance be made for the effect of this change, navigation becomes doubly hazardous; and now, that the Sound dues are abolished, there will probably be a greater number of ships than ever trading to the Baltic.

The navigation returns for 1856, recently published, afford a few items which we think remarkably instructive. The number of British vessels entered coastwise in England, during the year, was 93,238—an aggregate of 7,253,608 tons; and 262 foreign vessels, 45,901 tons. In the same year, 106,896 British vessels, 8,170,971 tons, and 85 foreigners, 14,602 tons, cleared outwards. Of steamers, 13,143 British, 3,045,612 tons, and 19 foreign, 4025 tons, entered inwards; and 12,964 British, 2,938,239 tons, and 29 foreign, 5539 tons, cleared outwards. The trade of the United Kingdom employs 26,029 British ships, 6,390,715 tons; and 20,744 foreign, 4,480,859 tons. And to these we add a fact worth record: it is now ordered that all transport-ships shall be fitted with Clifford's apparatus for lowering boats. Every trial, whether with ships at anchor or under full sail, but serves to prove the excellence and utility of this contrivance.

Astronomy is likely to be further cultivated in the southern hemisphere, for we hear that an observatory is to be erected on a rocky hill overlooking Sydney harbour, in a situation where the time-ball can be seen by all vessels at the anchorage. And before long, we shall have to report that an electric telegraph has been set up from Sydney to Melbourne. The colony is making progress. According to the census returns of 1856, the population of New South Wales was 266,000, numbering 147,000 males, and 119,000 females; of whom 80,000 are inhabitants of Sydney.

Liverpool and Manchester have held a meeting to consider the question of increasing the supply of cotton.—A successful attempt has been made to light a railway train with gas, adopted from the United States. Each train carries a gasometer, and the apparatus is so contrived that the gas can be turned off from any one carriage at pleasure.—Satisfactory experiments have been made at Woolwich to test Abbé Pauvert's method of making steel from old refuse and scraps of iron, equal to that produced from the best Swedish iron. It employs certain 'chemical ingredients and electric agency,' and causes no waste, for a ton of iron yields a ton of steel.

THE PATH THROUGH THE SNOW.

Bare and sunshiny, bright and bleak,
Rounded cold as a dead maid's cheek,
Folded white as a sinner's shroud
Or wandering angel's robe of cloud—
I know, I know,
Over the moor the path through the snow.

Narrow and rough it lies between
Wastes where the wind sweeps, biting keen,
And not a step of the slippery road
But marks where some weary foot has trod;
Who'll go, who'll go,
After the rest in the path through the snow?

They who would tread it must walk alone,
Silent and steadfast, one by one;
Dearest to dearest can only say:
'My heart! I follow thee all the way,
As we go, as we go,
Each after each in the path through the snow.'

It may be under that glittering haze
Lurks the promise of golden days,
That each sentinel tree is quivering
Deep at its core with the blood of spring,
And as we go, as we go,
Green blades are piercing the frozen snow.

It may be the unknown path will tend
Never to any earthly end,
Die with the dying day obscure,
And never lead to a human door,
That none know who did go
Patiently once, on this path through the snow.

No matter—no matter! The path shines plain,
The pure snow-crystals will deaden pain:
Above, like stars in the deep blue dark,
Guiding spirits will stand and mark;
Let us go, let us go,
Whither Heaven leads in the path through
snow!

NOTICE.

A NEW TALE,

ENTITLED

KIRKE WEBBE, OR THE PRIVATEER,

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'REMINISCENCES OF A BARRISTE
'RECOLLECTIONS OF A POLICE-OFFICER,' &c.,

Will be commenced on Saturday, 1st August, and conti
Weekly until completed.

The present number of the Journal completes the Seve
Volume, for which a title-page and index have been prepar
and may be had of the publishers and their agents.

END OF SEVENTH VOLUME.

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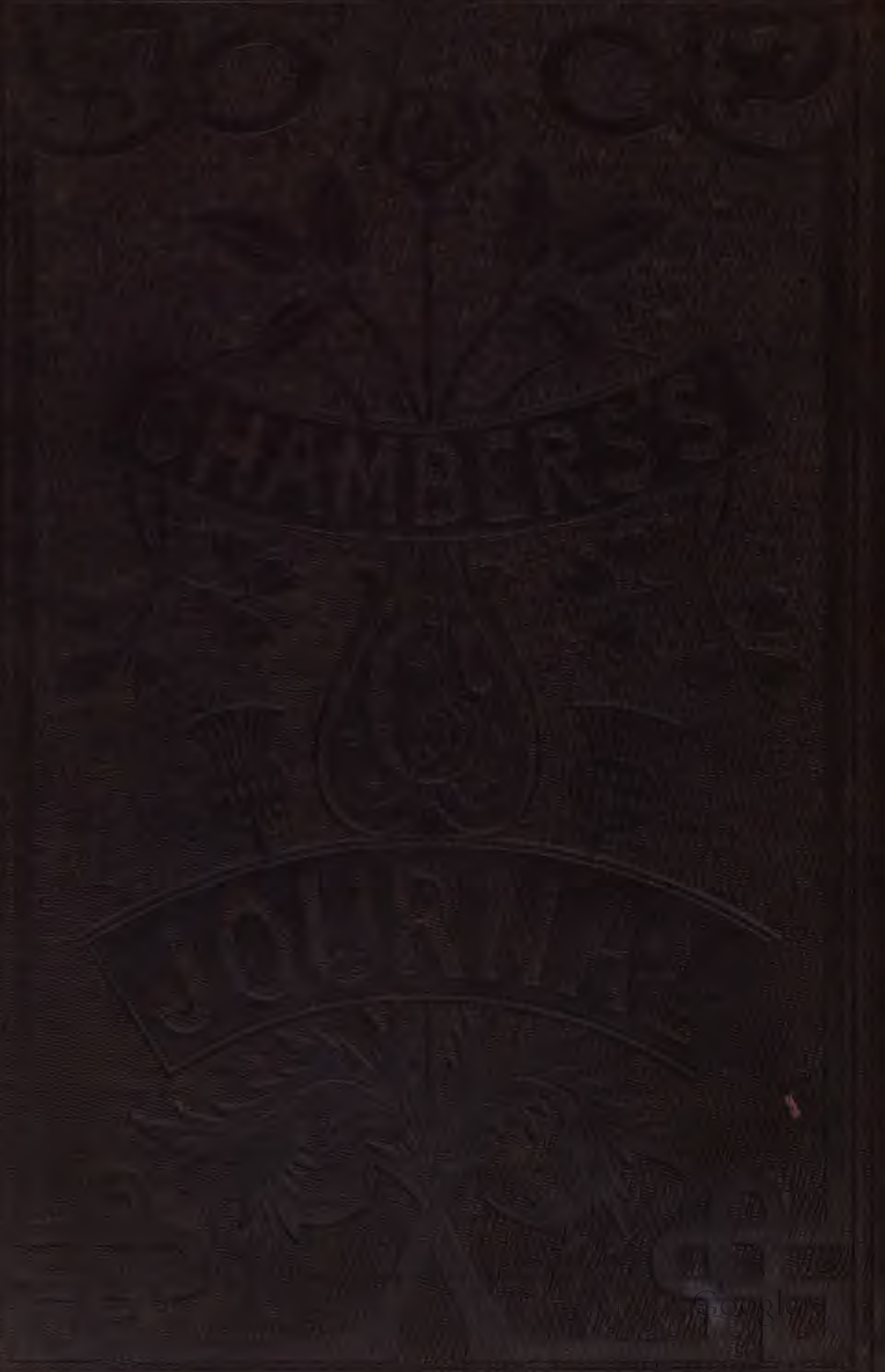
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